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Services for the Ordering of Ministry in The United Methodist Church

(Provisional Texts)

Prepared by
The General Board of Discipleship
and
The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
in collaboration with
The Council of Bishops

This text is for use at the 1999 and 2000 sessions of the annual conferences in
The United Methodist Church.

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This order is the 1992 service contained in *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, with necessary adaptations to accommodate legislation in the 1996 *Discipline*. It provides liturgical resources for ordaining persons in probationary and associate membership and members in full connection as deacons in one service. It may, therefore, be used with persons under both the 1992 and 1996 *Disciplines*.

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This order is a new service. It should be used at a time other than the services of consecration and ordination. Commissioning may be celebrated within "The Celebration of Christ's Ministry." It may also be used during the Report of the Board of the Ordained Ministry.

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This is a new service for recognizing various ministries, commissioning probationary members, and sending forth an annual conference under the umbrella of the ministry of all Christians. The service focuses on the ministry of all Christians and the Spirit's diversity of calls and gifts for ministry. This rite is flexible and invites adaptation to the needs and style of each annual conference.

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PREFACE

The 1996 General Conference of The United Methodist Church adopted changes to the ordering of ministry that require adaptation of the church's official services published in *The United Methodist Book of Worship* (1992). In addition, because some candidates for consecration or ordination are currently in processes that will be phased out, there is need for a period of transition in moving from the provisions of the 1992 *Book of Discipline* to the provisions of the 1996 *Book of Discipline*.

In order to provide liturgical texts appropriate to this period of transition, the 1996 General Conference directed the General Board of Discipleship, in consultation with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and the Council of Bishops, to make appropriate revisions of the church's services for the ordering of ministry.

A working group composed of staff of the General Board of Discipleship, the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, and the Council of Bishops has met throughout the quadrennium to provide the church with a set of provisional services for commissioning, consecrating, and ordaining persons for ministry. The working group:

- Reviewed sections of the 1996 *Book of Discipline* ("The Ministry of All Christians" and "The Ministry of the Ordained"), the orders for consecrations and ordinations in *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, and the "Proposed Revisions to Ordination Services" from the Commission to Study Ministry published in the 1996 *Daily Christian Advocate* (Advance Edition);

- Identified liturgical resources bishops and annual conferences would need;
- Prepared initial draft services for use and review;
- Published and distributed provisional texts for use by the 1997 and 1998 sessions of annual conferences;
- Received responses from the bishops and annual conferences and modified the drafts in light of their feedback;
- Engaged consultants on the critical issues raised;
- Continued the process of revision;
- Engaged Thomas Anderson Langford, III to edit the text for consistency and clarity.

Services for the Ordering of Ministry in The United Methodist Church has been prepared:

- a. For use by the bishops and annual conferences in 1999 and 2000
- b. For submission by the General Board of Discipleship to the 2000 General Conference for provisional use from 2001 to 2004.

A final document will be submitted to General Conference in 2004 for official adoption.

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THEOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION

These services for the ordering of ministry provide basic liturgical resources for commissioning, consecrating, and ordaining persons for ministry as The United Methodist Church makes transition from the provisions of the 1992 *Book of Discipline* to the provisions of the 1996 *Book of Discipline*.

"The Order for the Ordination of Deacons and Elders" provides a text to order the two newly defined orders of ministry: deacons in full connection and elders. This service may be used when there are only candidates under the 1996 *Discipline*.

"The Order for Consecration and Ordination" enables annual conferences to have one service of consecration and ordination. Using this service, the bishop may consecrate diaconal ministers, ordain deacons (persons in probationary and associate membership and in full connection), and ordain elders. This service may be used with persons under both the 1992 and 1996 *Disciplines*.

"The Order for the Ordination of Deacons" is the 1992 text contained in *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, with necessary adaptations to accommodate legislation in the 1996 *Discipline*. It provides liturgical resources for ordaining persons in probationary and associate membership and members in full connection as deacons in one service. It may, therefore, be used with persons under both the 1992 and 1996 *Disciplines*.

"The Order for the Ordination of Elders" is the 1992 text contained in *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, with necessary adaptations to accommodate legislation in the 1996 *Discipline*.

"The Order for the Consecration of Bishops" is the 1992 text contained in *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, with necessary adaptations to accommodate legislation in the 1996 *Discipline*.

"The Order for Commissioning Probationary

Members for Service" is a new service. It should be used at a time other than the services of consecration and ordination. Commissioning may be celebrated within "A Celebration of Christ's Ministry." It may also be used during the Report of the Board of Ordained Ministry.

"A Celebration of Christ's Ministry" is a new service recognizing various ministries, commissioning probationary members, and sending forth an annual conference under the umbrella of the ministry of all Christians. The service focuses on the ministry of all Christians and the Spirit's diversity of calls and gifts for ministry. This rite is flexible and invites adaptation to the needs and style of each annual conference.

"As services of consecration and ordination are acts of the whole Church, text and rubrics are to be used as approved by the General Conference." See *Discipline*—1996, ¶ 415.6. Because the official services approved by the 1992 General Conference and contained in *The United Methodist Book of Worship* do not accommodate the changes made by the 1996 General Conference, these texts for provisional use are commended to The United Methodist Church for use in each annual conference.

These services have been shaped and supported by the following understandings:

A. Commissioning and Ordination

Acts of ordination and commissioning, as well as consecrating and certifying, are anchored in the sacrament of baptism and the ministry of the baptized. These sign-acts are based on what is already implicit in baptism and rest upon the essential ministry given to all Christians in baptism. "By Water and the Spirit: A United Methodist Understanding of Baptism" states, "Through baptism, God calls and commissions persons to the general ministry of all Christian believers." See *The Book of Resolutions*—1996, p. 732. The statement continues, "The vocation of those in represen-

tative [certified, consecrated, and ordained] ministry includes focusing, modeling, supervising, shepherding, enabling, and empowering the general ministry of the Church . . . [and] is grounded in the same baptism that commissions the general priesthood of all believers" (p. 733).

1. Commissioning

By the prompting of the Spirit, the church has always "sent" persons in various forms of ministry and mission, including specific service as missionaries, work team members, and certified workers in specialized ministries. One aspect distinguishing the commissioning of probationary members from ordination of elders and deacons is duration:

Commissioning sends persons to a term of service, while ordination sets persons apart for lifelong service.

Commissioning may be compared to the experience of the early church in Antioch when the Holy Spirit instructed the community to "set apart Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I, the Holy Spirit, have called them" (Acts 13). The probationary period and the mentoring relationship that characterize it can also be seen in light of the relationship between Paul and Ananias (Acts 9) when the newly called evangelist was guided toward the fullness of his calling by the more seasoned leader.

The act of commissioning probationary members:

- Acknowledges and affirms God's call and the candidates' response, gifts, abilities, and training for servant leadership;
- Invokes God's grace for true service;
- Credentials candidates to lead the church and equip others for ministry;
- Calls candidates to enter a time of evaluation of their effectiveness for lifelong service as ordained ministers;
- Offers candidates the support of the annual conference.

The qualifications for election to probationary membership and commissioning include:

two years of candidacy; two years in a service setting; meeting the necessary educational requirements; presenting a health report; completing a written and oral examination; securing recommendations from the district committee and conference board of ordained ministry; having a favorable record in relation to felony, misdemeanor, or any incident of sexual misconduct; and submitting a written autobiographical statement. Upon recommendation of the conference board of ordained ministry and election to probationary membership by the annual conference, the commissioning may take place. See *Discipline—1996*, ¶ 315.1-13.

Those commissioned are to be appointed by the bishop to serve a minimum of three years as probationary members. The expectation of the three years of service includes: participation in theological growth using covenant groups to support their practice and work in servant leadership; contemplation of the grounding of ordained ministry and formation in covenant ministry in the annual conference; evaluation in terms of their ability to express and give leadership in servant ministry; engagement in ministries related to the order to which they plan to give themselves (those intending a lifetime as deacons in ministries of word and service and those intending a lifetime as elders in ministries of service, word, sacrament, and order). During this period of anticipating full connection, the commissioned are on probation as to character, servant leadership, and effectiveness in ministry. See *Discipline—1996*, ¶317.1-2.

The creation of the new category of Commissioned Ministers relates persons to the annual conference and to the ministry of the probationary members within the annual conference. Commissioning implies that the person is being "sent" by the annual conference for service and the annual conference invokes the Holy Spirit to empower commissioned ministers during their time of probationary membership. The probationary period is a time of full service and a temporary stage in one's journey toward ordination and full mem-

bership in the annual conference.

During probation, if a person serves as a pastor in a local church, he or she will be authorized for sacramental and pastoral duties through a local pastor's license. See *Discipline* — 1996, ¶341.

The period of commissioned ministry is concluded when the person is received as a full member of the annual conference and ordained as a deacon or elder, or a decision is made not to proceed toward ordination.

2. Ordination

Anchored in the baptismal call to lives of love, justice, and service, there are some Christians whose "gifts, evidence of God's grace, and promise of future usefulness are affirmed by the community and who respond to God's call by offering themselves in leadership as ordained ministers." See *Discipline* — 1996, ¶301.2.

Ordination is chiefly understood as the act of the Holy Spirit. As a liturgical act, ordination is also understood as the public prayer of the church confirming the Spirit's call to individuals and asking for them gifts and power for the ministry of deacon or elder.

The rite of ordination is the climax of a process in which the faith community discerns and validates the call, the gifts, and effectiveness for apostolic ministry by agency of the Holy Spirit. This is a full process in which all of the baptized share; it is not to be confined to one liturgical moment. The process begins with the church's discernment of God's call to individuals for service as ordained leaders, continues with support and scrutiny as they prepare for this work, culminates in electing them to the office and work of a deacon or elder, and is celebrated and enacted liturgically in the service of ordination.

Ordination is both to an office and a work for a lifetime. Ordination confers a new identity as well as authority for ministry. The new

identity of clergy persons is always claimed in relation to Christ and his call to leadership and service with the baptized for the life of the world. The authority is always exercised in stewardship of the mysteries of the gospel and the church's mission in the world. Ordination has to do with who the person is as well as what the person does in ministry.

Upon ordination, ordained persons become accountable to the whole church, the community of the ordained, and to the order. In the rite of ordination, ordinands express loyalty to The United Methodist Church, accepting its order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline; accept the responsibility of accountability to the bishop and to the annual conference; and are charged with authority for leadership in their places of service.

B. The Laying on of Hands

The act of laying on of hands occurs in several rites of the church: baptism, healing services, acts of blessing and commissioning, and consecration and ordination. The meaning of the laying on of hands is carried and communicated by the context and words that accompany the action.

The laying on of hands with prayer by the bishop is an ancient and essential part of the Christian ordering of ministry. This action, however, must always be seen in its larger context. These services emphasize the continuing prayer of the whole church. This larger context does not undermine the particular importance of the laying on of hands with prayer, but makes clear that such a prayer and gesture always takes place within the assembled community's life and liturgy; that ministry is formed and belongs within the ministry of the whole church.

The act of laying on of hands is not to be confused with the grace of ordination itself. The bestowal of this grace is the action of the Holy Spirit in the life of the ordinand, but the church prays for this action of the Spirit through the laying on of hands and recognizes the Spirit's power at work in those who have

received this sign-act. The connection through the physical touch between the ordinand and those who participate in the laying on of hands establishes the real connection between those who share in ordained ministry and symbolically connects the ordinand to all those who have shared in this ministry in all Christian communions in all ages.

The laying on of hands is an essential part of the act of prayer in ordination. Laying on of hands is more than saying, "I concur with the action of ordaining this person for ministry." That concurrence has been given already, in the prior approval by the charge conference, in the examination by the district and conference committees on ordained ministry, and in the election of the candidates by the clergy session of the annual conference. Laying on of hands is more than saying, "I offer my love and support to this person at the point of his or her ordination." That love and support may be given in other ways and at other points within or outside the rite. The laying on of hands is the invoking of the Spirit for the office and work to which God has called the person.

Who prays the ordination prayer? The bishop, as the presiding minister in the annual conference and as a general superintendent of the whole church, speaks the words, and the congregation joins in prayer led by the bishop. This presidential action of the bishop focuses the prayer of all persons and connects the assembled community's invocation of the Holy Spirit on each ordinand.

Who participates in the laying on of hands? The historic practice had been for the bishop alone to lay hands on those being ordained deacon and the bishop assisted by elders to lay hands on those being ordained elders. This practice had been rooted in a historic understanding of the relationship of each order to the bishop; deacons as persons assisting the bishop directly in works of charity and administration, and elders as persons assisting the bishop in presiding at Holy Communion and in guiding communal life.

The 1996 General Conference both affirmed the church's historic orders of deacons and elders and expressed its clear intention that these orders of deacons and elders be distinct and equal. Consequently, the revised services of ordination are shaped by these understandings:

- The Church affirmed distinct orders of ministry for deacons and elders, which are different in office and work, but are equal orders in leading the church in its mission and ministry;
- The appropriate way to recognize the equality of the distinctive orders is for both deacons and elders to play a collegial role in ordaining persons to their respective orders.

The collegial pattern, therefore, that our tradition has long observed in the ordination of elders is appropriate for United Methodist ordination of both deacons and elders. Thus the bishop, as the presiding officer of the annual conference and general superintendent, leads deacons in laying hands on those who are to be ordained deacon in full connection and leads the elders in laying hands on those who are to be ordained elders.

Several additional concerns are related to who joins in the laying on of hands. Although the *Discipline* offers bishops wide discretion regarding participation in the laying on of hands, these services urge simplicity and uniformity in practice, so that the liturgical action is clear, visible, and not unduly long. Good order and simplicity will guide the bishop in deciding the number who share in the laying on of hands. To maintain the unity of the United Methodist ministry, practices (1) should not vary widely from place to place, and (2) should adhere to the limits imposed by decorum and efficiency.

Bishops of other traditions and ecumenical representatives with ordaining authority may, at the discretion of the presiding bishop, join in laying hands on those being ordained.

Members from churches in the Consultation on Church Union are especially encouraged to participate. Such participation is strongly recommended and is a faithful witness to United Methodist ecumenical commitments.

Good order also guides the bishop in deciding whether persons who do not share the order into which the ordinands are being ordained should participate in the laying on of hands. Great care must be taken to avoid conveying the impression that persons beyond the order are providing an endorsement of the ordinand, or that they participate in the laying on of hands as representatives of the whole church. Endorsements are provided at the presentation of the candidates at the beginning of the service. The whole church is present in the prayer of the presiding bishop. Configurations that aim to include elders, deacons, non-ordained persons, and ecumenical guests to achieve comprehensive, representative participation in the laying on of hands are to be avoided.

In summary, the logic of the distinctive and equal order of deacons and elders in The United Methodist Church implies a normative ordination action in which the presiding bishop, as part of the prayer offered verbally on behalf of all Christians, joins with deacons or elders to lay hands on the ordinands; deacons with deacon ordinands, and elders with elder ordinands. Other participants are not ruled out on principle, but should be limited in the interest of good order, especially where the number and variety of participants may obscure the presiding role of the bishop and the collegial action of representative clergy of the order into which a person is being ordained.

C. Instruments and Sign Acts for the Ordering of Ministry

Ordinations and consecrations ritualize the distinctiveness of the different orders. Thus, not only what is said, but what is done and the signs and instruments are significant. The services herein recommend the following distinguishing vestments and instruments:

■ **For commissioned ministers**

No stole

No instrument

■ **For diaconal ministers**

Stole — over the left shoulder, hanging straight down to the waist as a towel

Instrument — towel and pitcher and basin

■ **For deacon**

Stole — over left shoulder and fastened under the right arm

Instrument — towel, pitcher, and basin

■ **For elder**

Stole — yoked at the back of the neck, hanging straight down from the shoulders

Instrument — paten and chalice

■ **For bishop**

Elder's stole and chasuble if Holy

Communion is celebrated

Elder's stole only if Holy Communion is not celebrated

Instrument — crozier (pastoral or shepherd's staff)

These unique instruments may be used in the services as indicated in the text.

The Bible is an instrument common to all the orders of Christ's ministry. The Bibles presented to those being consecrated or ordained should be either a gift or those belonging to the candidates so that there is continuity between presentation and use. The Bible held by probationary members to be commissioned should be used again at the time of ordination.

It is strongly recommended that Holy Communion be celebrated and that newly ordained elders, assisted by newly ordained deacons, serve the people, using other elders, deacons, diaconal ministers, and laity as needed. If two services are scheduled for commissionings, consecrations, and ordinations, it is recommended that the eucharist be celebrated as part of the ordination of elders.

D. A Day of Preparation

The bishop, the annual conference board of ordained ministry, and the respective orders of deacons and elders should plan for a day of preparation. This day apart may be on the day

of the ordination service or on a day as close as possible to it. This preparation will serve to strengthen the ritual action of the ordination service by connecting the liturgical action to a period of intensive preparation in prayer and

reflection. The day may include a time with the bishop, prayer and fasting, and reflection on the examination and prayers of the ordinal and entrance into the covenant community of their respective order.

LITURGICAL INTRODUCTION

There is no more complex liturgical task than planning for services of commissioning, consecration, and ordination. The numbers of persons involved and limitations of the available worship space make planning a logistical and liturgical tangled ball of yarn. At the same time, these moments of worship can and should be deeply formative of the character and identity of the candidates and the conference as a whole. The opportunity to celebrate Christ's ministry through all of the baptized and to set apart men and women as spiritual leaders calls all Christians to the deep roots of our faith and life in the church universal.

The liturgical structure and action in the rites of consecration and ordination include: recognition of our common ministry; presentation of those called to be set apart for apostolic ministry; the proclamation of the Word of God; examination of the candidates; prayer for the grace of God to fortify and equip them for the office and work to which they are to be consecrated or ordained by invocation of the Holy Spirit with the laying on of hands; authorization to do the work to which the candidates are called; and celebration of Holy Communion.

A. General Guidelines

These guidelines highlight some of the critical concerns that planners must consider. These concerns must be considered within the context of an annual conference's worship style, the place it meets, and the numbers of candidates. Some basic principles to keep in mind:

1. The bishop is in charge. The resident bishop should be responsible for the services.
2. Teamwork is essential. The bishop is responsible for these services in consultation with the conference board of ordained ministry, worship committee, and other annual conference committees.
3. Long-range planning is essential. Scheduling rehearsals, printing, assigning liturgical leadership, and a host of other matters require months of preparation.
4. Because ordinations are acts of the whole church, the text and rubrics of the orders

are to be used as approved by the General Conference. See *Discipline* — 1996, ¶415.6. There are profound denominational and ecumenical issues at stake in the way these services are celebrated in the annual conferences of The United Methodist Church. While carefully considered adaptation is allowed, discipline and care must be exercised.

5. Planning specific time allotments for the various parts of the service will ensure services that are of acceptable duration. For example, it may be necessary to ask the preacher to limit the sermon to ten minutes.
6. Anthems and other musical offerings may be used throughout these services. Choral calls to worship, responses to scripture, offertory anthems, and choral benedictions are appropriate. We strongly recommend that the annual conference music leader be involved in planning these services.

B. Strategic Questions

The following are fundamental decisions that need to be made before detailing services for the ordering of ministry:

1. How many services? If a conference will have relatively few consecrations and ordinations, one service may be enough. If a conference has large numbers to be consecrated and ordained, consider two services.
2. If you plan more than one service, what acts of ordering ministry will be used in each service? In general, it is better for diaconal ministers to be consecrated and deacons to be ordained in one service, elders to be ordained in one service, and commissioning probationary members to be included in the final Celebration of Christ's Ministry.
3. What pattern of movement will the bishop follow in the laying on of hands? The guiding principle must be good order. Plan a pattern of movement that is simple and allows for clear sight lines so that the assembly may visually participate in the action. In some settings, the bishop and those joining in the laying on of hands

may move from candidate to candidate while the candidates are kneeling in a line, circle, or semi-circle. In other settings, the candidates may move to the bishop one by one. At most, those laying on hands should not exceed five persons—particularly when there are many candidates. More than any other part of these services, this action must be carefully choreographed and implemented with leanness and discipline.

4. Will Holy Communion be celebrated and how? Services of ordination normally take place within a Service of Word and Table, with Holy Communion served to the entire congregation. When the annual conference ordains persons within a Service of Word and Table, the newly ordained immediately take their place to enact liturgically the ministries to which they have been ordained.

Local tradition and the numbers of persons to be consecrated and ordained will influence the decision about Holy Communion. If the numbers are large, the pressure will be strong not to celebrate the sacrament. The bishop and other planners will have to struggle to balance human attentiveness and endurance with ecclesial and sacramental integrity. Careful planning will result in an appropriate balance.

If you decide to celebrate Holy Communion, you will need to ensure that the sermon, acts of worship, and movement of the people are well rehearsed and kept within allowable time frames. To assist in a well paced service, during the hymn prior to the Great Thanksgiving, the serving teams take their places (at floor level near the table) already holding the bread and cups as the bishop leads the Prayer of Great Thanksgiving. When the bishop breaks the bread, other elders also break the bread and the serving teams move immediately to their stations and begin to serve the people who are guided to them by the ushers. When the serving teams have finished serving the people, they serve each other and return the

remaining bread and cups to the Lord's Table or to tables conveniently placed in the room.

In serving, elders share the bread and deacons (or diaconal ministers or other laity) share the cup.

C. General Rubrics

Abbreviations for *The United Methodist Hymnal* and *The United Methodist Book of Worship* are *UMH* and *UMBOW* respectively. Numbers preceded by *UMH* or *UMBOW* refer to items so numbered in the respective books.

Numbered pages without *UMH* or *UMBOW* refer to pages in this document.

An asterisk * indicates an act of worship for which the congregation may be invited to stand.

Following the style of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* — 1996, "Church" indicates The United Methodist Church, and "church" indicates the church universal.

The resident bishop should preside at the service.

Laity, diaconal ministers, and ordained deacons and elders may participate in leadership during the presentation of candidates, reading the scriptures, leading in prayer, presenting gifts for the Holy Communion, assisting the bishop, elders, and deacons in serving Communion, recognizing and affirming our common ministry, and in other ways at the discretion of the bishop.

The service should include representatives of other Christian communions, especially member churches of the Consultation on Church Union.

The service should take place during a session of annual conference. Red is the appropriate color for paraments and vestments for all the services.

The sermon should address the candidates for the office(s) being ordained and/or consecrated. The presiding bishop should preach the sermon and interpret the distinctiveness and equality of the differing orders of ministry.

The candidates are presented to the bishop using each candidate's full name.

When there are consecrations of diaconal ministers, the bishop lays hands on diaconal ministers. A district superintendent, a sponsor, a layperson, or a diaconal minister chosen by the bishop may also participate in the laying on of hands.

One or more deacons from the order of deacons may join the bishop in laying on of hands in ordaining deacons in full connection.

One or more elders from the order of elders may join the bishop in laying on of hands in ordaining elders.

Care should be taken to enable members of the congregation to see the laying on of hands by the bishop and others. The bishop may limit the number of persons participating in the laying on of hands to ensure that candidates are not hidden from the congregation.

Cameras, camcorders, and other equipment should not intrude upon the service of worship.

Unordained spouses and family members of ordinands should not participate in the laying on of hands. Family members and friends may be invited to stand where they are for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for a candidate.

Historically, the ordination prayer was a single prayer that included the moment when hands are laid upon each ordinand. The unity of this prayer is observable and heard as one prayer in circumstances where only one person is ordained a deacon or an elder. Because United Methodist polity and practice require election and ordination during the sessions of

the annual conference, the numbers of ordinands involved make it difficult, but not impossible, to portray the unity of the prayer.

Simplicity is essential so that the flow of the prayer and laying on of hands can be experienced and expressed with clarity. In some cases, the movement of the bishop from candidate to candidate for the laying on of hands may be logistically simpler than movement of candidates to the bishop. The goal always is for a unified sign-act of prayer with the laying on of hands.

When Holy Scriptures are presented to candidates for the charge "take authority . . .," complete texts of the Old and New Testaments are to be used. It is recommended that the Bible presented to each candidate be the ordinand's own Bible or a gift from the candidate's family, the bishop, or the board of ordained ministry.

If orders from another denomination are recognized, ordination is not repeated for any person. Persons whose orders are recognized should participate as candidates in the service except in the laying on of hands and presentation of the Bible.

A stole appropriate to the office should be presented. The stoles should be red, signifying the work and gifts of the Holy Spirit. If this presentation complicates or obstructs the simplicity of the action, vesting with a stole may be done at another point, such as when candidates leave the platform area.

Certificates of ordination should be presented. As with stoles, if this presentation complicates or obstructs the simplicity of the action, the certificates may be presented when the candidates leave the platform area.

Instruments appropriate to the office may also be presented. Such presentation may be done when candidates leave the platform area.

The services include every act of worship that may be involved. The bishop and planning

team may determine which texts or actions may be omitted. Because ordination is an act of the whole Church, however, deletions and changes must be made with utmost caution.

Careful attention to these General Guidelines, Strategic Questions, and General Rubrics will ensure that the ordering of ministry will be celebrated well.

THE ORDER FOR THE ORDINATION OF DEACONS AND ELDERS

This service provides a text to order the two newly defined orders of ministry: deacons in full connection and elders. It may be used when there are only candidates under the 1996 *Discipline*.

ENTRANCE

GATHERING

Festive music may be offered while the people gather. The service may then continue with a procession including the worship leaders, other participants in worship, candidates, and bishop(s).

PROCESSIONAL HYMN *

Processional hymns are listed on 88.

GREETING AND PRAYER *

The bishop greets the people and they respond:

The grace of Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

We come together to praise God,
to hear the Holy Word,
and to seek for ourselves and others
the power, presence, and direction of the Holy Spirit.
Let us pray.

**Eternal God, by Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit
you gave to your apostles many excellent gifts.**

Give your grace

**to all who have been called to servant ministry,
that they may with diligence and faithfulness
fulfill their various ministries.**

**Grant that we your people may follow where you lead,
perfect our ministries,
and live in joyful obedience to your will. Amen.**

RECOGNITION OF COMMON MINISTRY AND REAFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

The bishop, standing near a baptismal font, shell, or vessel of water, begins:

Ministry is the work of God,
done by the people of God.

Through baptism
all Christians are made part of the priesthood of all believers,
the church, Christ's body, made visible in the world.
We all share in Christ's ministry of love and service
for the redemption of the human family and the whole of creation.

Therefore, in celebration of our common ministry,
I call upon all God's people gathered here:

The bishop may scoop and pour water from the font, shell, or vessel and say:

Remember your baptism and be thankful.

**We remember our baptism
and affirm our common ministry.**

All people are seated.

PRESENTATION

A layperson, a member of the Board of Ordained Ministry, a deacon, and an elder, present to the bishop those persons who are to be ordained. The bishop stands before the Lord's Table, facing the people.

A layperson:

On behalf of the laity of local congregations
who have examined and approved these candidates,

A member of the Board of Ordained Ministry:

and on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry of this annual conference,
which has recommended these persons,
and this annual conference, which has approved them,
we present
these persons to be ordained deacons,
and these persons to be ordained elders:

The full name of each candidate is read aloud by a presenter: a deacon reading the names of deacon candidates; and an elder reading the names of elder candidates. Each candidate stands when the name is read.

After all the candidates have been presented, they remain standing, and the bishop says:

These persons are by God's grace
to be ordained to ministry.
Those authorized by the Church to inquire about them
have discerned that they are persons
of sound learning and of Christian character,

and possess the necessary signs of God's grace,
and have demonstrated a profound commitment to serve Jesus Christ.
Therefore, we believe them to be duly called to serve God.

We ask you, people of God,
to declare your assent
to the ordination of these persons.

Do you trust that they are worthy, by God's grace,
to be ordained?

We do! Thanks be to God!

Will you uphold them in their ministry?

With God's help, we will!

The bishop, presenters, and candidates are seated.

OFFERING

An offering for the work of God may be received. If Holy Communion will be celebrated, the offering is received prior to the Thanksgiving and Communion, and the financial gifts are brought forward with the gifts of bread and cup.

PROCLAMATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON(S)

Suggested scripture lessons are found on 87-88.

Hymns of response to the Scripture are listed on 88.

SERMON

THE APOSTLES' CREED *

See UMH 881, 882.

HYMN*

Hymns are listed on 88.

GENERAL EXAMINATION

*All are seated, except the candidates and the bishop, who stand facing one another.
The bishop examines the candidates:*

Ordination is a gift from God to the church
and is exercised in covenant with the whole church
and within the covenant of the order of deacons or elders.

My sisters and brothers,
you have been called,
to an ordained ministry.
The Church now confirms your calling through ordination.

As ordained ministers,
you are to be coworkers with the bishops,
deacons, diaconal ministers, commissioned ministers, elders,
and all of the faithful.

Remember that you are called
to serve rather than to be served,
to proclaim the faith of the Church and no other,
to look after the concerns of God above all.

So that we may know that you believe yourselves
to be called by God
and that you profess the Christian faith,
we ask you:

Do you believe that God has called you
to the life and work of ordained ministry?

I do so believe.

Do you believe in the Triune God,
and confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?

I do so believe and confess.

Are you persuaded
that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments
contain all things necessary for salvation
through faith in Jesus Christ,
and are the unique and authoritative standard
for the church's faith and life?

I am so persuaded, by God's grace.

Will you be faithful in prayer,
in the study of the Holy Scriptures,
and with the help of the Holy Spirit
continually rekindle the gift of God that is in you?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you be loyal to The United Methodist Church
accepting its order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline,
committing yourself to be accountable with those serving with you,
and to the bishop and those who are appointed to supervise your ministry?

I will, God being my helper.

The bishop addresses the candidates:

May God,
who has given you the will to do these things,
give you grace to perform them
that the work begun in you may be brought to perfection. **Amen.**

INVOCATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

*The people stand and sing the ancient ordination hymn "O Holy Spirit, By Whose Breath."
The suggested tune is HAMBURG LM. As an alternative, "Come Holy Ghost, Our Souls
Inspire" (UMH 651) may be said or sung.*

1. O Holy Spirit, by whose breath life rises vibrant out of death;
come to create, renew, inspire; come, kindle in our hearts your fire.
2. You are the seeker's sure resource, of burning love the living source,
protector in the midst of strife, the giver and the Lord of life.
3. In you God's energy is shown, to us your varied gifts make known.
Teach us to speak, teach us to hear; yours is the tongue and yours the ear.
4. Flood our dull senses with your light, in mutual love our hearts unite.
Your power the whole creation fills; confirm our weak, uncertain wills.
5. From inner strife grant us relief; turn nations to the ways of peace.
To fuller life your people bring that as one body we may sing:
6. Praise to the Father, Christ his Word, and to the Spirit: God the Lord,
to whom all honor, glory be both now and for eternity.

*After the hymn, the people and the elder candidates are seated.
The deacon candidates come forward and face the bishop.*

EXAMINATION OF DEACONS

The bishop examines the deacon candidates:

A deacon
is called to share in Christ's ministry of servanthood,
to relate the life of the community to its service in the world,

to lead others into Christian discipleship,
to teach and proclaim God's Word,

Here a large Bible may be lifted by an assistant.

to lead in worship,
to assist elders at Holy Baptism and Holy Communion,
to nurture disciples for witness and service,
to serve all people, particularly the poor, the sick, and the oppressed,

Here a towel and basin with pitcher may be lifted by an assistant.

to interpret to the church the world's hurts and hopes,
and to lead Christ's people in ministries of compassion and justice,
liberation and reconciliation
even in the face of hardship and personal sacrifice.

These are the duties of a deacon.

Do you believe that God has called you
to the life and work of a deacon?

I do so believe.

The bishop asks diaconal ministers who are offering themselves as ordained deacons in full connection:

In response to the call that was affirmed
at your consecration as a diaconal minister,
will you continue to exemplify and equip others for lives of service?

I will, with the help of God.

The bishop asks all candidates:

Will you, for the sake of the Church's life and mission
covenant to participate in the order of deacons?
Will you give yourself to God through the order of deacons
in order to sustain and build each other up
in prayer, study, worship, and service?

**I will, with the help of God,
and with the help of my sisters and brothers in the order of deacons.**

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND PRAYER FOR DEACONS

The bishop, facing the ordinands, calls the people to prayer:

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

let us pray for these persons to be ordained deacons.

The bishop, with hands extended over those being ordained, prays:

We thank you, Living God,
that in your great love
you sent Jesus Christ,
to take the form of a servant,
becoming obedient even to death on the cross,
and now resurrected and exalted in the heavens.
You have taught us, by his word and example,
that whoever would be great among us must be servant of all.

Give these servants grace to be faithful to their promises,
constant in their discipleship,
and always ready for works of loving service.
Make them modest and humble, gentle and strong,
rooted and grounded in love.
Give them a share in the ministry of Jesus Christ,
who came not to be served but to serve.

Ecumenical representatives and representatives of the order of deacons who are to join in the laying on of hands stand with the bishop.

Family members and friends may be invited to stand where they are for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for each ordinand.

The bishop lays both hands on each ordinand, praying:

Almighty God, pour upon *Name* the Holy Spirit
for the office and work of a deacon. **Amen.**

Immediately the candidate places hands on a Bible, as the bishop says:

Name, take authority as a deacon
to proclaim the Word of God,
and to lead God's people to serve the world.

RECOGNITION OF ORDERS

The bishop addresses those whose orders as deacons are to be recognized:

After due examination
of your call and ministry in another part of Christ's holy church,
we now welcome you to this Communion.
You have given assurance of your faith and Christian experience.
You have renewed the vows of your ordination
and committed yourself to uphold faithfully
The United Methodist Church.

We rejoice that you have been called to serve among us,
and pray that God may guide your ministry.

As each candidate comes forward, the bishop greets each one:

Name, we now recognize you as a deacon
in The United Methodist Church.

HYMN *

Hymns are listed on 88.

During the hymn a deacon's stole and/or a towel, pitcher, and basin may be given to each deacon.

The deacons return to their seats. The elder candidates now come forward.

EXAMINATION OF ELDERS

The bishop examines the elder candidates:

An elder
is called to share in the ministry of Christ
and of the whole church:
to preach and teach the Word of God

Here a large Bible may be lifted by an assistant.

and faithfully administer
the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion;

Here a paten and chalice may be lifted.

to lead the people of God in worship and prayer;
to lead persons to faith in Jesus Christ;
to exercise pastoral supervision,
order the life of the congregation,
counsel the troubled,
and declare the forgiveness of sin;
to lead the people of God
in obedience to mission in the world;
to seek justice, peace, and freedom for all people;
and to take a responsible place in the government of the Church
and in service in and to the community.

These are the duties of an elder.

Do you believe that God has called you
to the life and work of an elder?

I do so believe.

Will you, for the sake of the Church's life and mission
covenant to participate in the order of elders?
Will you give yourself to God through the order of elders
in order to sustain and build each other up
in prayer, study, worship, and service?

**I will, with the help of God,
and the help of my sisters and brothers in the order of elders.**

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND PRAYER FOR ELDERS

The bishop, facing the ordinands, calls the people to prayer:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,
let us pray for these to be ordained elders.

The bishop, with hands extended over those being ordained, prays:

We praise you, Eternal God,
because you have called us to be a priestly people,
offering to you acceptable worship through Jesus Christ,
Apostle and High Priest, Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.
We thank you that, by dying, Christ has overcome death
and, having ascended into heaven,
has poured forth gifts abundantly on your people,
making some apostles, some prophets,
some evangelists, some pastors and teachers,
to equip the saints for the work of ministry,
to build up Christ's body,
and to fulfill your gracious purpose in the world.

Give to these your servants the grace and power they need
to serve you in this ministry.
Make them faithful pastors, patient teachers, and wise counselors.
Enable them to serve without reproach,
to proclaim the gospel of salvation,
to administer the sacraments of the new covenant,
and to offer with all your people
spiritual sacrifices acceptable to you;
through Jesus Christ our Savior,
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

*Ecumenical representatives and representatives of the order of elders who are to join in the
laying on of hands stand with the bishop.*

Family members and friends may be invited to stand where they are for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for each ordinand.

The bishop lays both hands on each ordinand, praying:

Almighty God, pour upon *Name* the Holy Spirit,
for the office and work of an elder. **Amen.**

Immediately, the candidate places hands on a Bible, as the bishop says:

Name, take authority as an elder
to preach the Word of God,
and to administer the Holy Sacraments.

RECOGNITION OF ORDERS

The bishop addresses those whose orders as elders are to be recognized.

After due examination
of your call and ministry in another part of Christ's holy church,
we now welcome you to this Communion.
You have given assurance of your faith and Christian experience.
You have renewed the vows of your ordination
and committed yourself to uphold faithfully
The United Methodist Church.
We rejoice that you have been called to serve among us,
and pray that God may guide your ministry.

As each candidate comes forward, the bishop greets each one:

Name, we now recognize you as an elder
in The United Methodist Church.

HYMN *

Hymns are listed on 88.

During the hymn, an elder's stole and/or chalice and paten together, may be given to each elder.

If the Lord's Supper is celebrated, the new elders, new deacons and others who will serve the communion move to their places. The bread and cup are brought to the Lord's Table or uncovered if already in place. Deacons prepare the table for the Lord's Supper. See UMBOW 26.

If the Lord's Supper is not celebrated, the new elders return to their seats, and the service concludes with the Sending Forth.

THANKSGIVING AND COMMUNION

TAKING THE BREAD AND CUP

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING *

This text is used by the bishop, while the congregation uses A Service of Word and Table III UMH 15-16 or one of the musical settings UMH 17-25.

The bishop stands behind the Lord's Table and, facing the people from this time through the Breaking the Bread, begins the prayer:

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

The bishop may lift and extend hands and keep them raised.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth.

You built your church
on the foundation of the prophets and apostles,
and instituted a holy ministry
so that your prophetic and apostolic Word
might be heard until the end of time.

And so,
with your people on earth
and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

The bishop may lower and join hands.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The bishop may raise and extend hands.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
He called disciples and empowered them for ministry.
By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection
you gave birth to your church,
and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

The bishop touches or lifts the bread, and prays:

On the night in which Jesus gave himself up for us,
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

The bishop touches or lifts the cup, and says:

When the supper was over, Jesus took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me."

The bishop may raise and extend hands.

When Jesus, the great Shepherd of your flock, ascended,
he sent forth the apostles
to preach the gospel and make disciples of all nations.
He promised to be with them always,
and sent the Holy Spirit to lead them.

And so,
in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

The bishop may hold hands over the bread and cup:

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
on these servants who assume new leadership among us,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.

The bishop may raise and extend hands:

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit in your holy church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God,
now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER *

See UMH 270-1, 894-96.

BREAKING THE BREAD

The bishop, still standing behind the Lord's Table facing the people, breaks the bread in silence, or while saying:

Because there is one loaf,
we, who are many, are one body,
because we all partake of the one loaf.
The bread which we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.

The bishop lifts the cup in silence, or while saying:

The cup over which we give thanks
is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

The bread and cup are given to the people by new elders and new deacons, and other laity and clergy assisting as needed, with these or other words:

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

The blood of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

The congregation sings hymns while the bread and cup are given. In addition to hymns UMH 612-41 and others listed in the index under Holy Communion (UMH 943), many others in UMH are effective in expressing the people's loving communion with God and with one another.

When all have received, the deacons put the Lord's Table in order.

PRAYER AFTER RECEIVING

The bishop says:

Let us pray.

**We thank you, gracious God, for giving yourself to us,
and for uniting us in the communion of your Holy Spirit.
We bless you for raising up among us faithful servants.
Clothe them with your righteousness
and grant that we, with them,
may glorify you by giving ourselves to others. Amen.**

SENDING FORTH

PRAYER

If the Lord's Supper was not celebrated, the bishop says:

Let us pray.

**We thank you, gracious God,
for raising up among us faithful servants.
Clothe them with your righteousness,
and grant that we, with them,
may glorify you by giving ourselves to others. Amen.**

HYMN *

If the closing hymn is a recessional, it should follow the Dismissal with Blessing; otherwise it should precede the Dismissal with Blessing. Closing hymns are listed on 88.

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING *

The bishop blesses the people:

The grace of Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all always.

A newly ordained deacon dismisses the people, saying:

Go in peace
to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do.

**We are sent in Christ's name.
Thanks be to God!**

GOING FORTH *

The newly ordained deacons and elders may be greeted following the service at ...

THE ORDER FOR CONSECRATION AND ORDINATION

This service enables annual conferences to have one service of consecration and ordination. Using this service, the bishop may consecrate diaconal ministers, ordain deacons (persons in probationary and associate membership and in full connection), and ordain elders. This service may be used with candidates under both the 1992 and 1996 *Discipline*.

ENTRANCE

GATHERING

Festive music may be offered while the people gather. The service may then continue with a procession including the worship leaders, other participants in worship, candidates, and bishop(s).

PROCESSIONAL HYMN *

Processional hymns are listed on 88.

GREETING AND PRAYER *

The bishop greets the people and they respond:

The grace of Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

We come together to praise God,
to hear the Holy Word,
and to seek for ourselves and others
the power, presence, and direction of the Holy Spirit.
Let us pray.

**Eternal God, by Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit
you gave to your apostles many excellent gifts.**

Give your grace

**to all who have been called to servant ministry,
that they may with diligence and faithfulness
fulfill their various ministries.**

**Grant that we your people may follow where you lead,
perfect our ministries,
and live in joyful obedience to your will. Amen.**

RECOGNITION OF COMMON MINISTRY AND REAFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

The bishop, standing near a baptismal font, shell, or vessel of water, begins:

Ministry is the work of God,
done by the people of God.

Through baptism

all Christians are made part of the priesthood of all believers,
the church, Christ's body, made visible in the world.

We all share in Christ's ministry of love and service
for the redemption of the human family and the whole of creation.

Therefore, in celebration of our common ministry,
I call upon all God's people gathered here:

The bishop may scoop and pour water from the font, shell, or vessel and say:

Remember your baptism and be thankful.

**We remember our baptism
and affirm our common ministry.**

The people are seated.

PRESENTATION

A layperson, a member of the Board of Ordained Ministry, a diaconal minister, a deacon, and an elder, present to the bishop those persons who are to be consecrated or ordained. The bishop stands before the Lord's Table, facing the people.

A layperson:

On behalf of the laity of local congregations
who have examined and approved these candidates,

A member of the Board of Ordained Ministry:

and on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry of this annual conference,
which has recommended these persons,
and this annual conference, which has approved them,
we present
these persons to be consecrated diaconal ministers,
these persons to be ordained deacons,
and these persons to be ordained elders:

The full name of each candidate is read aloud by a presenter: a diaconal minister reading the names of diaconal candidates; a deacon reading the names of deacon candidates; and an elder reading the names of elder candidates. Each candidate stands when the name is read.

After all the candidates have been presented, they remain standing, and the bishop says:

These persons are by God's grace
to be consecrated or ordained to ministry.
Those authorized by the Church to inquire about them
have discerned that they are persons
of sound learning and of Christian character,
and possess the necessary signs of God's grace,
and have demonstrated a profound commitment to serve Jesus Christ.
Therefore, we believe them to be duly called to serve God.

We ask you, people of God,
to declare your assent
to the consecration or ordination of these persons.

Do you trust that they are worthy, by God's grace,
to be consecrated or ordained?

We do! Thanks be to God!

Will you uphold them in their ministry?

With God's help, we will!

The bishop, presenters, and candidates are seated.

OFFERING

An offering for the work of God may be received. If Holy Communion will be celebrated, the offering is received prior to the Thanksgiving and Communion, and the financial gifts are brought forward with the gifts of bread and cup.

PROCLAMATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON(S)

Suggested scripture lessons are found on 87-88.

Hymns of response to the Scripture are listed on 88.

SERMON

THE APOSTLES' CREED *

See UMH 881, 882.

HYMN*

Hymns are listed on 88.

GENERAL EXAMINATION

All are seated, except the candidates and bishop, who stand facing one another. The bishop examines all the candidates:

Consecration and ordination are gifts from God to the church
and are exercised in covenant with the whole church
and within the covenant of the office and order.

My sisters and brothers,
you have been called,
to a consecrated or an ordained ministry.
The Church now confirms your calling through consecration or ordination.

As consecrated and ordained ministers,
you are to be coworkers with the bishops,
deacons, diaconal ministers, commissioned ministers, elders,
and all of the faithful.

Remember that you are called
to serve rather than to be served,
to proclaim the faith of the Church and no other,
to look after the concerns of God above all.

So that we may know that you believe yourselves
to be called by God
and that you profess the Christian faith,
we ask you:

Do you trust that God has called you
to the life and work of consecrated or ordained ministry?

I do so trust.

Do you believe in the Triune God,
and confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?

I do so believe and confess.

Are you persuaded
that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments
contain all things necessary for salvation
through faith in Jesus Christ,
and are the unique and authoritative standard
for the church's faith and life?

I am so persuaded, by God's grace.

Will you be faithful in prayer,
in the study of the Holy Scriptures,

and with the help of the Holy Spirit
continually rekindle the gift of God that is in you?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you be loyal to The United Methodist Church
accepting its order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline,
committing yourself to be accountable with those serving with you,
and to the bishop and those who are appointed to supervise your ministry?

I will, God being my helper.

The bishop addresses the candidates:

May God,
who has given you the will to do these things,
give you grace to perform them
that the work begun in you may be brought to perfection. **Amen.**

INVOCATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

*The people stand and sing the ancient ordination hymn "O Holy Spirit, By Whose Breath."
The suggested tune is HAMBURG LM. As an alternative, "Come Holy Ghost, Our Souls
Inspire" (UMH 651) may be said or sung.*

1. O Holy Spirit, by whose breath life rises vibrant out of death;
come to create, renew, inspire; come, kindle in our hearts your fire.
2. You are the seeker's sure resource, of burning love the living source,
protector in the midst of strife, the giver and the Lord of life.
3. In you God's energy is shown, to us your varied gifts make known.
Teach us to speak, teach us to hear; yours is the tongue and yours the ear.
4. Flood our dull senses with your light, in mutual love our hearts unite.
Your power the whole creation fills; confirm our weak, uncertain wills.
5. From inner strife grant us relief; turn nations to the ways of peace.
To fuller life your people bring that as one body we may sing:
6. Praise to the Father, Christ his Word, and to the Spirit: God the Lord,
to whom all honor, glory be both now and for eternity.

*After the hymn, the people and the deacon and elder candidates are seated. The diaconal
candidates come forward and face the bishop.*

EXAMINATION OF DIACONAL MINISTERS

The bishop examines the candidates for diaconal ministry:

A diaconal minister is called to exemplify Christ's servanthood,
to participate in the leadership of worship,
to teach the gospel,
to counsel the troubled,
to serve God's people with special concern
for love, justice, and ministry with the poor, the sick, and the oppressed,
to equip the baptized for ministry,
and to embody the unity of the congregation's worship
with its life in the world.

These are the duties of a diaconal minister.

Do you believe that God has called you
to the life and work of a diaconal minister?

I do so believe.

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND PRAYER FOR DIACONAL MINISTERS

The bishop, facing the candidates, calls the people to prayer:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,
let us pray for these persons to be consecrated as diaconal ministers.

The bishop, with hands extended over those being consecrated, prays:

We give thanks to you, Gracious God,
that in your great love
you sent Jesus Christ,
to take the form of a servant,
becoming obedient even to death on the cross,
and now resurrected and exalted in the heavens,
and that you have taught us, by his word and example,
that whoever would be great among us must be servant of all.

Give to these servants the grace and power
to serve you in diaconal ministry,
clothe them with your righteousness,
so that your people may be strengthened
and your name glorified in all the world.

Family members and friends may be invited to stand where they are for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for each candidate.

The bishop, joined by those chosen to share the laying on of hands, lays both hands on

each candidate to be consecrated, praying:

Almighty God, pour upon *Name* the Holy Spirit
for the office and work of a diaconal minister. **Amen.**

Immediately, the candidate places hands on a Bible, as the bishop says:

Name, take authority as a diaconal minister
to teach the Word,
to practice justice,
and to serve God's people.

HYMN *

Hymns are listed on 88.

During the hymn, a diaconal minister's stole and/or towel and basin may be given to the diaconal ministers.

The diaconal ministers return to their seats. The deacon candidates come forward and face the bishop.

EXAMINATION OF DEACONS

The bishop examines the deacon candidates:

A deacon
is called to share in Christ's ministry of servanthood,
to relate the life of the community to its service in the world,
to lead others into Christian discipleship,
to teach and proclaim God's Word,

Here a large Bible may be lifted by an assistant.

to lead in worship,
to assist elders at Holy Baptism and Holy Communion,
to nurture disciples for witness and service,
to serve all people, particularly the poor, the sick, and the oppressed,

Here a towel and basin with pitcher may be lifted by an assistant.

to interpret to the church the world's hurts and hopes,
and to lead Christ's people in ministries of compassion and justice,
liberation and reconciliation
even in the face of hardship and personal sacrifice.

These are the duties of a deacon.

Do you believe that God has called you

to the life and work of a deacon?

I do so believe.

The bishop asks any in probationary or associate membership to be ordained deacon:

Will you, anticipating lifelong servant leadership,
give yourself to this time of preparation, examination, and discernment,
trusting God to form within you the ability to lead and equip others
for ministries of service in the world?

I will, with the help of God.

The bishop asks diaconal ministers who are offering themselves as ordained deacons in full connection:

In response to the call that was affirmed
at your consecration as a diaconal minister,
will you continue to exemplify and equip others for lives of service?

I will, with the help of God.

The bishop asks those candidates to be ordained as deacons in full connection:

Will you, for the sake of the Church's life and mission
covenant to participate in the order of deacons?
Will you give yourself to God through the order of deacons
in order to sustain and build each other up
in prayer, study, worship, and service?

**I will, with the help of God,
and with the help of my sisters and brothers in the order of deacons.**

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND PRAYER FOR DEACONS

The bishop, facing the ordinands, calls the people to prayer:

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
let us pray for these persons to be ordained deacons.

The bishop, with hands extended over those being ordained, prays:

We thank you, Living God,
that in your great love
you sent Jesus Christ,
to take the form of a servant,
becoming obedient even to death on the cross,
and now resurrected and exalted in the heavens.
You have taught us, by his word and example,

that whoever would be great among us must be servant of all.

Give these servants grace to be faithful to their promises,
constant in their discipleship,
and always ready for works of loving service.

Make them modest and humble, gentle and strong,
rooted and grounded in love.

Give them a share in the ministry of Jesus Christ,
who came not to be served but to serve.

At the Ordination of Deacons in Probationary Membership and Associate Membership

Family members and friends may be invited to stand where they are for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for each ordinand.

The bishop alone lays both hands on those to be ordained deacon in the probationary relationship, praying:

Almighty God, pour upon *Name* the Holy Spirit
for the office and work of a deacon. **Amen.**

Immediately, the candidate places hands on a Bible, as the bishop says:

Name, take authority as a deacon
to proclaim the Word of God,
and to lead God's people to serve the world.

At the Ordination of Deacons in Full Connection

Ecumenical representatives and representatives of the order of deacons who are to join in the laying on of hands stand with the bishop.

Family members and friends may be invited to stand where they are for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for each ordinand.

The bishop lays both hands on each ordinand, praying:

Almighty God, pour upon *Name* the Holy Spirit
for the office and work of a deacon. **Amen.**

Immediately, the candidate places hands on a Bible, as the bishop says:

Name, take authority as a deacon
to proclaim the Word of God,
and to lead God's people to serve the world.

RECOGNITION OF ORDERS

The bishop addresses those whose orders as deacons are to be recognized:

After due examination
of your call and ministry in another part of Christ's holy church,
we now welcome you to this Communion.
You have given assurance of your faith and Christian experience.
You have renewed the vows of your ordination
and committed yourself to uphold faithfully
The United Methodist Church.
We rejoice that you have been called to serve among us,
and pray that God may guide your ministry.

As each candidate comes forward, the bishop greets each one:

Name, we now recognize you as a deacon
in The United Methodist Church.

HYMN *

Hymns are listed on 88.

During the hymn a deacon's stole and/or a towel, pitcher, and basin may be given to each deacon.

The deacons return to their seats. The elder candidates come forward and face the bishop.

EXAMINATION OF ELDERS

The bishop examines the elder candidates:

An elder
is called to share in the ministry of Christ
and of the whole church:
to preach and teach the Word of God

Here a large Bible may be lifted by an assistant.

and faithfully administer
the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion;

Here a paten and chalice may be lifted.

to lead the people of God in worship and prayer;
to lead persons to faith in Jesus Christ;
to exercise pastoral supervision,
order the life of the congregation,
counsel the troubled,

and declare the forgiveness of sin;
to lead the people of God
in obedience to mission in the world;
to seek justice, peace, and freedom for all people;
and to take a responsible place in the government of the Church
and in service in and to the community.

These are the duties of an elder.

Do you believe that God has called you
to the life and work of an elder?

I do so believe.

Will you, for the sake of the Church's life and mission
covenant to participate in the order of elders?
Will you give yourself to God through the order of elders
in order to sustain and build each other up
in prayer, study, worship, and service?

**I will, with the help of God,
and the help of my sisters and brothers in the order of elders.**

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND PRAYER FOR ELDERS

The bishop, facing the ordinands, calls the people to prayer:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,
let us pray for these persons to be ordained elders.

The bishop, with hands extended over those being ordained, prays:

We praise you, Eternal God,
because you have called us to be a priestly people,
offering to you acceptable worship through Jesus Christ,
Apostle and High Priest, Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.
We thank you that, by dying, Christ has overcome death
and, having ascended into heaven,
has poured forth gifts abundantly on your people,
making some apostles, some prophets,
some evangelists, some pastors and teachers,
to equip the saints for the work of ministry,
to build up Christ's body,
and to fulfill your gracious purpose in the world.

Give to these your servants the grace and power they need
to serve you in this ministry.
Make them faithful pastors, patient teachers, and wise counselors.
Enable them to serve without reproach,

to proclaim the gospel of salvation,
to administer the sacraments of the new covenant,
and to offer with all your people
spiritual sacrifices acceptable to you;
through Jesus Christ our Savior,
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

Ecumenical representatives and representatives of the order of elders who are to join in the laying on of hands stand with the bishop.

Family members and friends may be invited to stand where they are for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for each ordinand.

The bishop lays both hands on each ordinand, praying:

Almighty God, pour upon *Name* the Holy Spirit,
for the office and work of an elder. **Amen.**

Immediately, the candidate places hands on a Bible, as the bishop says:

Name, take authority as an elder
to preach the Word of God,
and to administer the Holy Sacraments.

RECOGNITION OF ORDERS

The bishop addresses those whose orders as elders are to be recognized.

After due examination
of your call and ministry in another part of Christ's holy church,
we now welcome you to this Communion.
You have given assurance of your faith and Christian experience.
You have renewed the vows of your ordination
and committed yourself to uphold faithfully
The United Methodist Church.
We rejoice that you have been called to serve among us,
and pray that God may guide your ministry.

As each candidate comes forward, the bishop greets each one:

Name, we now recognize you as an elder
in The United Methodist Church.

HYMN *

Hymns are listed on 88.

During the hymn, an elder's stole and/or chalice and paten together, may be given to each elder.

If the Lord's Supper is celebrated, the new elders, new deacons and others who will serve the communion move to their places. Use the service pages 27-30.

If the Lord's Supper is not celebrated, the new elders return to their seats, and the service concludes with the Sending Forth.

SENDING FORTH

PRAYER

If the Lord's Supper was not celebrated, the bishop says:

Let us pray.

**We thank you, gracious God,
for raising up among us faithful servants.
Clothe them with your righteousness,
and grant that we, with them,
may glorify you by giving ourselves to others. Amen.**

HYMN *

If the closing hymn is a recessional, it should follow the Dismissal with Blessing; otherwise it should precede the Dismissal with Blessing. Closing hymns are listed on 88.

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING *

The bishop blesses the people:

The grace of Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all always.

A newly ordained deacon dismisses the people, saying:

Go in peace
to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do.

**We are sent in Christ's name.
Thanks be to God!**

GOING FORTH *

The newly consecrated and ordained ministers may be greeted following the service at ...

THE ORDER FOR THE ORDINATION OF DEACONS

This service is the 1992 text contained in *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, with necessary adaptations to accommodate legislation in the 1996 *Discipline*. It provides liturgical resources for ordaining probationary and associate members and members in full connection as deacons in one service. It may, therefore, be used with candidates under both the 1992 and 1996 *Discipline*.

ENTRANCE

GATHERING

Festive music may be offered while the people gather. The service may then continue with a procession including the worship leaders, other participants in worship, candidates, and bishop(s).

PROCESSIONAL HYMN *

Processional hymns are listed on 88.

GREETING AND PRAYER *

The bishop greets the people and they respond:

The grace of Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

God of light and truth,
you led your holy apostles
to appoint ministers in every place.
Guide your Church,
through the wisdom of your Holy Spirit,
that we may choose women and men with gifts of grace
for the ministry of word and service.
May we uphold them in their work,
and may your reign be extended;
through Jesus Christ, the Shepherd of our souls,
who with you and the Holy Spirit,
is worshiped and glorified,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF COMMON MINISTRY AND REAFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

The bishop, standing near a baptismal font, shell, or vessel of water, begins:

Ministry is the work of God,
done by the people of God.

Through baptism
all Christians are made part of the priesthood of all believers,
the Church, Christ's body, made visible in the world.
We all share in Christ's ministry of love and service
for the redemption of the human family and the whole of creation.

Therefore, in celebration of our common ministry,
I call upon all God's people gathered here:

The bishop may scoop and pour water from the font, shell, or vessel and say:

Remember your baptism and be thankful.

**We remember our baptism
and affirm our common ministry.**

The people are seated.

PRESENTATION

A layperson and an ordained deacon in full connection from the Board of Ordained Ministry, present to the bishop those persons who are to be ordained deacons. The bishop stands before the Lord's Table, facing the people.

A layperson:

On behalf of the laity of the local congregations
who have examined and approved these candidates,

A deacon:

and on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry of this annual conference,
which has recommended these persons,
and this annual conference, which has approved them,
we present these persons to be ordained deacons:

The full name of each candidate is read aloud by a deacon, and each candidate stands when the name is read. After all the candidates have been presented, they remain standing, and the bishop says:

These persons are by God's grace
to be ordained to the ministry of deacons.

Those authorized by the Church to inquire about them
have discerned that they are persons
of sound learning and of Christian character,
and possess the necessary signs of God's grace,
and have demonstrated a profound commitment to serve Jesus Christ.
Therefore, we believe them to be duly called to serve God.

We ask you, people of God,
to declare your assent
to the ordination of these persons.

Do you trust that they are worthy, by God's grace,
to be ordained deacons?

We do! Thanks be to God!

Will you uphold them in their ministry?

With God's help, we will!

The bishop, presenters, and candidates are seated.

OFFERING

An offering for the work of God may be received. If Holy Communion will be celebrated, the offering is received prior to the Thanksgiving and Communion, and the financial gifts are brought forward with the gifts of bread and cup.

PROCLAMATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON(S)

Suggested scripture lessons are found on 87-88.

Hymns of response to the Scripture are listed on 88.

SERMON

THE APOSTLES' CREED *

See UMH 881, 882.

HYMN *

Hymns are listed on 88.

EXAMINATION OF DEACONS

All are seated, except the deacon candidates. The bishop examines the candidates:

Ordination is a gift from God to the church
and is exercised in covenant with the whole church
and within the covenant of the order.

My sisters and brothers,
you have been called to be ordained to the ministry of deacons.
The Church now confirms your calling through ordination.

As deacons,
you are to be coworkers with the bishops,
other deacons, diaconal ministers, commissioned ministers, elders,
and all of the faithful.

Remember that you are called
to serve rather than to be served,
to proclaim the faith of the Church and no other,
to look after the concerns of God above all.

A deacon
is called to share in Christ's ministry of servanthood,
to relate the life of the community to its service in the world,
to lead others into Christian discipleship,
to teach and proclaim God's Word,

Here a large Bible may be lifted by an assistant.

to lead in worship,
to assist elders at Holy Baptism and Holy Communion,
to nurture disciples for witness and service,
and to serve all people, particularly the poor, the sick, and the oppressed,

Here a towel and basin with pitcher may be lifted by an assistant.

to interpret to the church the world's hurts and hopes,
and to lead Christ's people in ministries of compassion and justice,
liberation and reconciliation
even in the face of hardship and personal sacrifice.

These are the duties of a deacon.

Do you believe that God has called you
to the life and work of a deacon?

I do so believe.

Do you believe in the Triune God,

and confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?

I do so believe and confess.

Are you persuaded
that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments
contain all things necessary for salvation
through faith in Jesus Christ,
and are the unique and authoritative standard
for the church's faith and life?

I am so persuaded, by God's grace.

Will you be faithful in prayer,
in the study of the Holy Scriptures,
and with the help of the Holy Spirit
continually rekindle the gift of God that is in you?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you be loyal to The United Methodist Church,
accepting its order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline,
committing yourself to be accountable with those serving with you,
and to the bishop and those who are appointed to supervise your ministry?

I will, God being my helper.

The bishop asks any in probationary or associate membership to be ordained:

Will you, anticipating lifelong servant leadership,
give yourself to this time of preparation, examination, and discernment,
trusting God to form within you the ability to lead and equip others
for ministries of service in the world?

I will, with the help of God.

The bishop asks diaconal ministers who are offering themselves as ordained deacons in full connection:

In response to the call that was affirmed
at your consecration as a diaconal minister,
will you continue to exemplify and equip others for lives of service?

I will, with God's continuing help.

The bishop asks all those candidates to be ordained as deacons in full connection:

Will you, for the sake of the Church's life and mission
covenant to participate in the order of deacons?
Will you give yourself to God through the order of deacons

in order to sustain and build each other up
in prayer, study, worship and service?

**I will, with the help of God,
and with the help of my sisters and brothers in the order of deacons.**

The bishop addresses all the candidates:

May God,
who has given you the will to do these things,
give you grace to perform them
that the work begun in you may be brought to perfection. **Amen.**

INVOCATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

*The people stand and sing the ancient ordination hymn "O Holy Spirit, By Whose Breath."
The suggested tune is HAMBURG LM. As an alternative, "Come Holy Ghost, Our Souls
Inspire" (UMH 651) may be said or sung.*

1. O Holy Spirit, by whose breath life rises vibrant out of death;
come to create, renew, inspire; come, kindle in our hearts your fire.
2. You are the seeker's sure resource, of burning love the living source,
protector in the midst of strife, the giver and the Lord of life.
3. In you God's energy is shown, to us your varied gifts make known.
Teach us to speak, teach us to hear; yours is the tongue and yours the ear.
4. Flood our dull senses with your light, in mutual love our hearts unite.
Your power the whole creation fills; confirm our weak, uncertain wills.
5. From inner strife grant us relief; turn nations to the ways of peace.
To fuller life your people bring that as one body we may sing:
6. Praise to the Father, Christ his Word, and to the Spirit: God the Lord,
to whom all honor, glory be both now and for eternity.

After the hymn, the people are seated. The deacon candidates come forward and face the bishop.

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND PRAYER FOR DEACONS

The bishop, facing the ordinands, calls the people to prayer:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,
let us pray for these persons to be ordained deacons.

The bishop, with hands extended over those being ordained, prays:

We thank you, Lord God,
that in your great love
you sent Jesus Christ,
to take the form of a servant,
becoming obedient even to death on the cross,
and now resurrected and exalted in the heavens.
You have taught us, by his word and example,
that whoever would be great among us must be servant of all.

Give these servants grace to be faithful to their promises,
constant in their discipleship,
and always ready for the works of loving service.
Make them modest and humble, gentle and strong,
rooted and grounded in love.
Give them a share in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

At the Ordination of Deacons in Probationary Membership and Associate Membership

Family members and friends may be invited to stand where they are for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for each ordinand.

The bishop alone lays both hands on those to be ordained deacon in the probationary relationship praying:

Almighty God, pour upon *Name* the Holy Spirit
for the office and work of a deacon. **Amen.**

Immediately, the candidate places hands on a Bible, as the bishop says:

Name, take authority as a deacon
to proclaim the Word of God,
and to lead God's people to serve the world.

At the Ordination of Deacons in Full Connection

Ecumenical representatives and representatives of the order of deacons who are to join in the laying on of hands stand with the bishop.

Family members and friends may be invited to stand where they are for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for each ordinand.

The bishop lays both hands on each ordinand, praying:

Almighty God, pour upon *Name* the Holy Spirit
for the office and work of a deacon. **Amen.**

Immediately, the candidate places hands on a Bible, as the bishop says:

Name, take authority as a deacon
to proclaim the Word of God,
and to lead God's people to serve in the world.

RECOGNITION OF ORDERS

The bishop addresses those whose orders as deacons are to be recognized:

After due examination
of your call and ministry in another part of Christ's holy church,
we now welcome you to this Communion.
You have given assurance of your faith and Christian experience.
You have renewed the vows of your ordination
and committed yourself to uphold faithfully
The United Methodist Church.
We rejoice that you have been called to serve among us,
and pray that the Spirit of God may guide your ministry.

As each candidate comes forward, the bishop greets each one:

Name, we now recognize you as a deacon
in The United Methodist Church.

HYMN*

Hymns are listed on 88.

During the hymn a deacon's stole and/or a towel, pitcher, and basin may be given to each deacon.

If the Lord's Supper is celebrated, use the service pages 27-30.

If the Lord's Supper is not celebrated, the new deacons return to their seats, and the service concludes with the Sending Forth.

SENDING FORTH

PRAYER

If the Lord's Supper was not celebrated, the bishop says:

Let us pray.

**We thank you, gracious God,
for raising up among us faithful servants
for the ministry of deacons.**

**Clothe them with your righteousness,
and grant that we, with them,
may glorify you by giving ourselves to others. Amen.**

HYMN *

If the closing hymn is a recessional, it should follow the Dismissal with Blessing; otherwise it should precede the Dismissal with Blessing. Closing hymns are listed on 88.

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING *

The bishop blesses the people:

The grace of Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you always.

A newly ordained deacon dismisses the people, saying:

Go in peace
to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do.

**We go in the name of Christ.
Thanks be to God!**

GOING FORTH *

The newly ordained deacons may be greeted following the service at ...

THE ORDER FOR THE ORDINATION OF ELDERS

This service is the 1992 text contained in *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, with necessary adaptations to accommodate legislation in the 1996 *Discipline*.

ENTRANCE

GATHERING

Festive music may be offered while the people gather. The service may then continue with a procession including the worship leaders, other participants in worship, candidates, and bishop(s).

PROCESSIONAL HYMN *

Processional hymns are listed on 88.

GREETING AND PRAYER *

The bishop greets the people and they respond:

The grace of Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

**God of light and truth,
you led your holy apostles
to appoint ministers in every place.
Guide your church,
through the wisdom of your Holy Spirit,
that we may choose women and men with gifts of grace
for the ministry of service, word, sacrament, and order.
May we uphold them in their work,
and may your reign be extended;
through Jesus Christ, the Shepherd of our souls,
who with you and the Holy Spirit,
is worshiped and glorified,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

RECOGNITION OF COMMON MINISTRY AND REAFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

The bishop, standing near a baptismal font, shell, or vessel of water, begins:

Ministry is the work of God,

done by the people of God.

Through baptism

all Christians are made part of the priesthood of all believers,
the church, Christ's body, made visible in the world.

We all share in Christ's ministry of love and service
for the redemption of the human family and the whole of creation.

Therefore, in celebration of our common ministry,
I call upon all God's people gathered here:

The bishop may scoop and pour water from the font, shell, or vessel and say:

Remember your baptism and be thankful.

**We remember our baptism
and affirm our common ministry.**

The people are seated.

PRESENTATION

A layperson and an elder from the Board of Ordained Ministry, present to the bishop those persons who are to be ordained elders. The bishop stands before the Lord's Table, facing the people.

A layperson:

On behalf of the laity of local congregations
who have examined and approved these candidates,

An elder:

and on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry of this annual conference,
which has recommended these persons,
and this annual conference, which as approved them,
we present to you these persons
to be ordained elders:

The full name of each candidate is read aloud by an elder. Each candidate stands when the name is read. After all the candidates have been presented, they remain standing, and the bishop says:

These persons are by God's grace
to be ordained to the ministry of elders.
Those authorized by the Church to inquire about them
have discerned that they are persons
of sound learning and of Christian character,
and possess the necessary signs of God's grace,
and have demonstrated a profound commitment to serve Jesus Christ.

Therefore, we believe them to be duly called to serve God.

We ask you, people of God,
to declare your assent
to the ordination of these persons.

Do you trust that they are worthy, by God's grace,
to be ordained elders?

We do! Thanks be to God!

Will you uphold them in their ministry?

With God's help, we will!

The bishop and candidates are seated.

OFFERING

An offering for the work of God may be received. If Holy Communion will be celebrated, the offering is received prior to the Thanksgiving and Communion, and the financial gifts are brought forward with the gifts of bread and cup.

PROCLAMATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON(S)

Suggested scripture lessons are found on 87-88.

Hymns of response to the Scripture are listed on 88.

SERMON

THE APOSTLES' CREED *

See UMH 881, 882.

HYMN *

Hymns are listed on 88

EXAMINATION OF ELDERS

All are seated, except the elder candidates and the bishop, who stand facing each other. The bishop examines the candidates:

Ordination is a gift from God to the church
and is exercised in covenant with the whole church

and within the covenant of the order.

My brothers and sisters,
you have been called to be ordained to the ministry of elders.
The Church now confirms your calling through ordination.

As elders,
you are to be coworkers with the bishops,
deacons, diaconal ministers, commissioned ministers, and other elders.

Remember that you are called
to serve rather than to be served,
to proclaim the faith of the church and no other,
to look after the concerns of God above all.

An elder
is called to share in the ministry of Christ
and of the whole church:
to preach and teach the Word of God

Here a large Bible may be lifted by an assistant.

and faithfully administer
the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion;

Here a paten and chalice may be lifted.

to lead the people of God in worship and prayer;
to lead persons to faith in Jesus Christ;
to exercise pastoral supervision,
order the life of the congregation,
counsel the troubled,
and declare the forgiveness of sin;
to lead the people of God
in obedience to mission in the world;
to seek justice, peace, and freedom for all people;
and to take a responsible place in the government of the Church
and in service in and to the community.

These are the duties of an elder.

Do you believe that God has called you
to the life and work of an elder?

I do so believe.

Do you believe in the Triune God,
and confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?

I do so believe and confess.

Are you persuaded
that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments
contain all things necessary for salvation
through faith in Jesus Christ,
and are the unique and authoritative standard
for the church's faith and life?

I am so persuaded, by God's grace.

Will you be faithful in prayer,
in the study of the Holy Scriptures,
and with the help of the Holy Spirit
continually rekindle the gift of God that is in you?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you be loyal to The United Methodist Church,
accepting its order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline,
defending it against all doctrines contrary to God's Holy Word,
and committing yourself to be accountable
with those serving with you,
and to the bishop and those who are appointed to supervise your ministry?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you, for the sake of the Church's life and mission
covenant to participate in the order of elders?
Will you give yourself to God through the order of elders
in order to sustain and build each other up
in prayer, study, worship and service?

**I will, with the help of God,
and the help of my sisters and brothers in the order of elders.**

May God,
who has given you the will to do these things,
give you grace to perform them
that the work begun in you may be brought to perfection. **Amen.**

INVOCATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

*The people stand and sing the ancient ordination hymn "O Holy Spirit, By Whose Breath."
The suggested tune is HAMBURG LM. As an alternative, "Come Holy Ghost, Our Souls
Inspire" (UMH 651) may be said or sung.*

1. O Holy Spirit, by whose breath life rises vibrant out of death;
come to create, renew, inspire; come, kindle in our hearts your fire.

2. You are the seeker's sure resource, of burning love the living source,
protector in the midst of strife, the giver and the Lord of life.
3. In you God's energy is shown, to us your varied gifts make known.
Teach us to speak, teach us to hear; yours is the tongue and yours the ear.
4. Flood our dull senses with your light, in mutual love our hearts unite.
Your power the whole creation fills; confirm our weak, uncertain wills.
5. From inner strife grant us relief; turn nations to the ways of peace.
To fuller life your people bring that as one body we may sing:
6. Praise to the Father, Christ his Word, and to the Spirit: God the Lord,
to whom all honor, glory be both now and for eternity.

After the hymn, the people are seated. The elder candidates come forward and face the bishop.

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND PRAYER FOR ELDERS

The bishop, facing the ordinands, calls the people to prayer:

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
let us pray for these persons to be ordained elders.

The bishop, with hands extended over those being ordained, prays:

We praise you, Eternal God,
because you have called us to be a priestly people,
offering to you acceptable worship through Jesus Christ,
Apostle and High Priest, Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.
We thank you that, by dying, Christ has overcome death
and, having ascended into heaven,
has poured forth gifts abundantly on your people,
making some apostles, some prophets,
some evangelists, some pastors and teachers,
to equip the saints for the work of ministry,
to build up Christ's body,
and to fulfill your gracious purpose in the world.

Give to these your servants the grace and power they need
to serve you in this ministry,
Make them faithful pastors, patient teachers, and wise counselors.
Enable them to serve without reproach,
to proclaim the gospel of salvation,
to administer the sacraments of the new covenant,
and to order the life of the Church
and to offer with all your people
spiritual sacrifices acceptable to you;

through Jesus Christ our Savior,
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

Ecumenical representatives and representatives of the order of elders who are to join in laying on of hands stand with the bishop.

Family members and friends may be invited to stand where they are for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for each ordinand.

The bishop lays both hands on the head of each ordinand, praying:

Almighty God, pour upon *Name* the Holy Spirit,
for the office and work of an elder. **Amen.**

Immediately, the candidate places hands on a Bible, as the bishop says:

Name, take authority as an elder
to preach the Word of God,
and to administer the Holy Sacraments.

RECOGNITION OF ORDERS

The bishop addresses those whose orders as elders are to be recognized:

After due examination
of your call and ministry in another part of Christ's holy church,
we now welcome you to this Communion.
You have given assurance of your faith and Christian experience.
You have renewed the vows of your ordination
and committed yourself to uphold faithfully
The United Methodist Church.
We rejoice that you have been called to serve among us,
and pray that the Spirit of God may guide your ministry.

As each candidate comes forward, the bishop greets each one:

Name, we now recognize you as an elder
in The United Methodist Church.

HYMN *

Hymns are listed on 88.

During the hymn, an elder's stole and/or chalice and paten together, may be given to each elder.

If the Lord's Supper is celebrated, the new elders, new deacons and others who will serve

the communion move to their places. Use the service pages 27-30.

If the Lord's Supper is not celebrated, the new elders return to their seats, and the service concludes with the Sending Forth.

SENDING FORTH

PRAYER

If the Lord's Supper was not celebrated, the bishop says:

Let us pray.

**We thank you, God,
for raising up among us faithful servants
for the ministry of elders.
Clothe them with your righteousness,
and grant that we, with them,
may glorify you by giving ourselves to others. Amen.**

HYMN *

If the closing hymn is a recessional, it should follow the Dismissal with Blessing; otherwise it should precede the Dismissal with Blessing. Closing hymns are listed on 88.

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING *

The bishop blesses the people:

The grace of Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you always.

A newly ordained elder dismisses the people, saying:

Go in peace
to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do.

**We are sent in Christ's name.
Thanks be to God.**

GOING FORTH *

The newly ordained elders may be greeted following the service at ...

INTRODUCTION TO THE CONSECRATION OF BISHOPS

"The task of superintending in The United Methodist Church resides in the office of bishop... From apostolic times, certain ordained persons have been entrusted with the particular tasks of superintending... Those who superintend carry primary responsibility for ordering the life of the Church. It is their task to enable the gathered Church to worship and to evangelize faithfully.... It is also their task to facilitate the initiation of structures and strategies for the equipping of Christian people for service in the Church and in the world in the name of Jesus Christ and to help extend the service in mission." See *Discipline* — 1996, ¶ 401.

"The office of bishop... exists in The United Methodist Church as a particular ministry. Bishops are elected... from the group of elders who are ordained to be ministers of word, service, sacrament, and order and thereby participate in the ministry of Christ, in sharing a royal priesthood which has apostolic roots (1 Peter 2:9; John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-3; 1 Timothy 3:1-7).

"Bishops... share in the full ministry as ordained elders. The body of Christ is one; yet many members with differing functions are all joined together in the one body (1 Corinthians 12:28)." See *Discipline* — 1996, ¶ 404.

"Consecration of bishops may take place at the session of the conference at which election occurs or at a place and time designated by the conference. The consecration service may include bishops from other jurisdictional and central conferences. It is strongly urged that the consecration service also include representatives from other Christian communions (see ¶ 103, 427.2, 1901)." See *Discipline* — 1996, ¶ 406.2.c.

The laying on of hands by other bishops originated in the practice of the early church as a sign of episcopal unity and collegiality. The imposition of the hands of all the bishops present and prayer at the consecration of a new bishop signify the bishop-elect's empowerment by the Holy Spirit and admission to the duties of episcopal ministry by those who share the same responsibility. The laying on of hands also signifies the bishop-elect's reception into the episcopal college. Only bishops should participate in the laying on of hands.

The senior bishop should be responsible for the service of consecration and should plan it in consultation with the jurisdictional or central conference Episcopal Committee.

A bishop should preside at the consecration service. Other bishops, lay-persons, and clergy may also assist during the worship. Laity, diaconal ministers, and ordained deacons and elders may participate in leadership as indicated.

Spouses and other family members of candidates for consecration should not participate in the laying on of hands.

When only one bishop-elect will be consecrated, the presentation, salutation and prayer, examination, and laying on of hands and prayer should be appropriately adjusted.

Because consecrations are acts of the whole Church, the text and rubrics of The Order for the Consecration of Bishops are to be used as approved by the General Conference.

THE ORDER FOR THE CONSECRATION OF BISHOPS

ENTRANCE

GATHERING

Festive music may be offered while the people gather. The service may then continue with a procession including the worship leaders, bishop(s)-elect, and bishop(s).

PROCESSIONAL HYMN *

Processional hymns are listed on 88.

GREETING AND PRAYER *

The presiding bishop greets and the people respond:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

The Creator of heaven and earth.

Let us pray.

**Almighty God, by your Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit
you gave to your apostles many excellent gifts.**

**Give your grace to all servants of your church,
that we may with diligence and faithfulness
fulfill our various ministries.**

**Grant that we your people may follow where you lead
and live in joyful obedience to your will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

All people are seated.

PRESENTATION

One layperson and one ordained deacon or elder, chosen by the presiding bishop, present each bishop-elect to the presiding bishop, who stands before the Lord's Table, facing the people. The presenters say:

Bishop *Name*,
we present to you *full name of bishop-elect*,
an elder in the Church,
to be consecrated a bishop in the church of Jesus Christ.

The full name of each bishop-elect is read. Each candidate stands when the name is read.

After each bishop-elect has been presented, the bishops-elect remain standing. The presiding bishop addresses the congregation:

People of God,
full names of bishops-elect are,
by God's grace,
to be consecrated bishops in the church.
They have been duly elected to this ministry.
We ask you to declare your assent.

Do you trust that they are worthy,
by God's grace, to be consecrated bishops?

We do! Thanks be to God!

Will you uphold them in their ministry?

With God's help, we will!

SALUTATION AND PRAYER

The presiding bishop then says:

The scriptures tell us
that our Savior Jesus Christ spent the whole night in prayer
before he chose and sent forth the twelve apostles.
The apostles also prayed before they appointed Matthias
to be one of their number.
Let us offer our prayers to almighty God
before *Name of each bishop-elect*
are consecrated for the work
to which the Holy Spirit has called them.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

*All pray in silence for the candidates.
The presiding bishop prays:*

Almighty God, giver of all good things,
by your Holy Spirit you have appointed
a diversity of ministries in your church.
Look in mercy upon these your servants,
now to be set apart for the ministry of a bishop,
so replenish them with holiness of life,
and fill them with the power of your Holy Spirit,
that both by word and by deed,
they may serve you faithfully and joyously,
to the glory of your name and the building up of your church;
through Jesus Christ our Savior,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The bishop and bishops-elect are seated.

OFFERING

An offering for the work of God may be received. If Holy Communion will be celebrated, the offering is received prior to the Thanksgiving and Communion, and the financial gifts are brought forward with the gifts of bread and cup.

PROCLAMATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON(S)

Suggested scripture lessons are found on 87-88.

Hymns of response to the Scripture are listed on 88.

SERMON

THE APOSTLES' CREED *

See UMH 881, 882.

HYMN *

Hymns are listed on 88.

During the hymn, the bishops-elect come forward.

EXAMINATION

The people are seated. The bishops-elect stand facing the presiding bishop. The bishop examines the bishops-elect:

*My brothers and sisters,
you are to be consecrated bishops in the church of God.*

All Christian ministry is Christ's ministry of reconciling love.
All baptized Christians are called
to share this ministry of service in the world,
to the glory of God
and for the redemption of the human family.

From among the baptized
some are called by God and set apart by the Church
to serve God's people
as commissioned ministers, diaconal ministers,
deacons, elders, and bishops.

You have been ordained to the ministry of word and sacrament;
you are now called, as bishops in the Church,
to reaffirm the vows made at your ordination as elders,
and to represent Christ's servanthood
in a special ministry of oversight.

You are called to guard the faith, to seek the unity,
and to exercise the discipline of the whole church;
and to supervise and support the Church's life, work,
and mission throughout the world.

As servants of the whole church,
you are called to preach and teach
the truth of the gospel to all God's people;
to lead the people in worship,
in the celebration of the Sacraments,
and in their mission of witness and service in the world,
and so participate in the gospel command
to make disciples of all nations.

As bishops and pastors,
you are to lead and guide
all persons entrusted to your oversight;
join in the consecration of bishops,
ordain deacons and elders,
consecrate diaconal ministers,
and commission other ministers
for service to the church and to the world;
and provide for the ministry of word and sacrament
in the congregations committed to your care.

Your joy will be to follow Jesus the Christ
who came not to be served but to serve.

Will you accept the call to this ministry as bishops
and fulfill this trust in obedience to Christ?

I will, by the grace of God.

Will you guard the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine,
and discipline of the Church
against all that is contrary to God's Word?

I will, for the love of God.

As bishops and pastors, will you,
in cooperation with diaconal ministers, commissioned ministers,
deacons, and elders,
encourage and support all baptized people
in their gifts and ministries,
pray for them without ceasing,
proclaim and interpret to them the gospel of Christ,
and celebrate with them the Sacraments of our redemption?

**I will, in the name of Christ,
the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.**

Will you share with other bishops
in the supervision of the whole Church;
support the elders and take counsel with them;
guide and strengthen the commissioned ministers,
diaconal ministers, and deacons
and all others who minister in the Church;
and ordain, consecrate, and send others to minister
in Christ's name?

All this I will do, by the grace given me.

May the God
who has given you the will to do these things
give you grace to perform them,
that the work begun in you may be brought to perfection. **Amen.**

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND PRAYER

The presiding bishop calls the people to prayer:

As *Name of each bishop-elect*
are consecrated bishops in the church,
let us invoke the Holy Spirit on their behalf
and pray for them
in the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

The bishops-elect kneel.

The people pray for them in silence.

The ancient ordination hymn "O Holy Spirit, By Whose Breath" on pages 18-19 and UMBOW 223 or an alternate text UMH 651 may be sung.

The other bishops participating join the presiding bishop. The presiding bishop now extends hands over the kneeling bishops-elect and begins the prayer of consecration:

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
giver of mercies and source of all comfort,
dwelling on high but having regard for the lowly,
knowing all things before they come to pass:
we give you thanks that from the beginning
you have gathered and prepared a people
to be heirs of the covenant of Abraham and Sarah,
and have raised up prophets, rulers, and priests,
never leaving your temple without a ministry.
We praise you also that from the creation
you have graciously accepted the service
of those whom you have chosen.

Bishops and others with episcopal responsibilities from other communions may be invited to join the presiding bishop to lay on hands.

Family members and friends may be invited to stand where they are for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for each bishop-elect.

The presiding bishop now lays hands on the head of each bishop-elect, joined by the other bishops participating. The presiding bishop lays both hands on each bishop-elect, praying:

Gracious God,
pour upon *Name* the Holy Spirit,
for the ministry of a bishop. **Amen.**

When hands have been laid upon all bishops-elect, the presiding bishop, with both hands extended over them, continues to pray:

Almighty God,
fill the hearts of these your servants
whom you have chosen to be bishops
with such love of you and of all the people
that they may feed and tend the flock of Christ,
serve in the ministry of reconciliation,
and supervise and support the life and work of the Church.
In all things may they present before you
the acceptable offering of a pure, gentle, and holy life;
through Jesus Christ your servant,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honor and power and glory,
now and for ever. **Amen.**

Immediately, each new bishop places hands on a Bible, as the bishop says:

Name, receive the Holy Scriptures.
Feed the flock of Christ,
defend them in Christ's truth,
and be a faithful steward of Christ's word and sacraments.

After the new bishops have received a Bible, the presiding bishop says to them:

Reflect upon the contents of this book.
Give attention to reading, exhortation, and teaching.
Be to the people of God
a prophetic voice and a courageous leader.
Be to the flock of Christ a shepherd;
support the weak, heal the sick,
bind up the broken, restore the outcast,
seek the lost, relieve the oppressed.
Faithfully administer discipline,
but do not forget mercy,
that when the Chief Shepherd shall appear
you may receive the never-fading crown of glory. **Amen.**

HYMN *

Hymns are listed on 88

If the Lord's Supper is celebrated, the new bishops remain to assist, especially in serving the people. Use the service pages 27-30. The service concludes with the following prayer:

PRAYER AFTER RECEIVING

A bishop says:

Let us pray.

**We thank you, gracious Lord, for giving yourself to us,
and for uniting us in the fellowship of your Holy Spirit.
We bless you for raising up among us
your faithful servants *Names of new bishops*
for the ministry of a bishop.
Clothe them with your righteousness
and grant that we, with them,
may glorify you by giving ourselves to others;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

If the Lord's Supper is not celebrated, the new bishops return to their seats, and the service concludes with the Sending Forth.

SENDING FORTH

PRAYER

If the Lord's Supper was not celebrated, the presiding bishop says:

Let us pray.

We thank you, gracious Lord,
for raising up among us
your faithful servants *Names of new bishops*
for the ministry of a bishop.

We pray that they may be examples
of the new life in Christ
in words and action, in love and patience,
and in holiness of life.

Grant that we, with them, may glorify you
by giving ourselves to others;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

HYMN *

If the closing hymn is a recessional, it should follow the Dismissal with Blessing; otherwise it should precede the Dismissal with Blessing. Closing hymns are listed on 88.

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING *

A new bishop dismisses and blesses the people.

GOING FORTH *

The new bishops may be greeted following the service at ...

THE ORDER FOR COMMISSIONING PROBATIONARY MEMBERS FOR SERVICE

This Order is a new service. It should be used at a time other than the services of consecration and ordination. Commissioning may be celebrated within "A Celebration of Christ's Ministry," p. 78. It may also be used during the Report of the Board of Ordained Ministry.

When used as a stand-alone rite an appropriate hymn and scripture reading should precede the presentation of the candidates for commissioning. Scripture texts and hymn suggestions may be found on 87-88. Luke 10:1-12 and Acts 13:1-4 are particularly appropriate.

The bishop chooses which of the forms of commissioning (p. 75) will be used.

During probation, if a person is to serve as a pastor in a local church, he or she will be authorized for sacramental and pastoral duties through a local pastor's license. See *Discipline*—1996, ¶ 341. See also pp. 83-84 below, or *UMBOW* 717.

PRESENTATION

The registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry or another member of the annual conference presents to the bishop probationary members to be commissioned. The full name of each candidate is read aloud. Each candidate stands when the name is read.

After all the candidates have been presented, they remain standing and face the bishop. The bishop says to the congregation:

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
these women and men stand here today,
elected as probationary members of this annual conference
and commended to us for commissioning to ministry among us.

Christ gave this command:

"Ask the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest."

In Antioch, the Holy Spirit instructed the community

to "Set apart Barnabas and Saul

for the work to which I, the Holy Spirit, have called them."

These sisters and brothers know our Savior's concern for God's people,
see the plentiful harvest,

and are ready to respond generously to the Lord
in the words of the prophet: "Here I am, send me."

Urged on by the love of Christ and strengthened by the Holy Spirit,
they come to declare in public
their desire to bind themselves to the service of God
and to be appointed to share in the ministry of Christ.

The Church has discerned that they are persons of sound learning

and of Christian character,
possessing the necessary gifts
and signs of God's grace for this ministry.

In commissioning them,
we acknowledge and affirm God's calling them
and their response to that call;
we affirm their gifts, abilities, and training for servant leadership;
and we invoke God's grace upon them for true service.

We ask you, people of God,
to declare your assent to the commissioning of these persons.

Do you trust that they are called by God's grace,
to be commissioned?

We do so trust!
Thanks be to God!

Will you uphold them in their ministry?

With God's help, we will!

The bishop examines the candidates:

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
this is a solemn hour in your life and the life of the church.
You have shared in the ministry of all the baptized
and you have witnessed that Christ calls you into ordained ministry.
Serving among us as faithful disciples,
we have seen in you gifts and grace for leading the people of God in service.

Will you give yourself fully to the work of God in the world
and to servant leadership in the life and work of Christ's church?

Following Christ, I will.

Will you join with other probationary members
for mutual support in the practice of leadership among the people of God?

With God's help, I will.

COMMISSIONING

PRAYER OF COMMISSION

The candidates kneel. The bishop commissions the candidates in one of two ways:

1. The bishop, extending arms over all the candidates, prays

Gracious God,
by your Holy Spirit
help your servants to understand and live the mystery of your love.
Deepen their sense of purpose
as they fulfill commissioned ministry,
and prepare for ordination.

The bishop, extending arms over each candidate individually, says:

Name, I commission you
to be a faithful servant leader among the people,
to lead the church in service,
to proclaim the Word of God,
and to equip others for ministry,
in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

or

2. The bishop, laying both hands upon each candidate, prays:

Gracious God, with the power of your Holy Spirit,
send Name to lead and equip your people for ministry.
May he/she be a faithful servant leader among the people,
to lead the church in service,
to proclaim the Word of God,
and to equip others for ministry,
in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

PRAYER

After all the candidates have been commissioned, the bishop says:

Let us pray.

Then all but those being commissioned pray:

Almighty God,
may the grace of ministry rest upon these your servants
and may the opportunity to serve
lead them into the fullness of your calling.
Clothe them with your righteousness,
and grant that they may glorify you

**by giving themselves to others;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

While a hymn is sung, the bishop, assisted by the conference secretary, presents to each commissioned minister "Credentials of a Probationary Member of an Annual Conference."

No stoles or instruments are presented to the commissioned ministers.

The newly commissioned ministers are seated.

INTRODUCTION TO A CELEBRATION OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY

This ritual is a new service recognizing various ministries, commissioning probationary members, and sending forth an annual conference under the umbrella of the ministry of all Christians. The service focuses on the ministry of all Christians and the Spirit's diversity of calls and gifts for ministry. This rite is flexible and invites adaptation to the needs and style of each annual conference.

The service should be used at a time separate from the consecration of diaconal ministers and the ordination of elders and deacons.

The service may include any or all of the following acts:

- Celebration and affirmation of the ministry of all Christians in transforming the world and recognition of those baptized or confirmed during the preceding year;
- Celebration and recognition of commitment to short-term Christian service, including work teams (*UMBOW 592*);
- Recognition of certification of persons to specialized ministries;
- Celebration and affirmation of persons going out and being received as missionaries;
- Commissioning probationary members for service;
- Presentation of licenses to local pastors (*UMBOW 717*);
- Other appropriate recognition or reaffirmation of other persons in ministry.
- Distribution and fixing of appointments.

The names of persons in each ministry should be listed in the order of service, particularly when they will be presented as a group.

Careful planning is essential for the service to move with grace and vitality. Care should be given to ensure that the service is not unduly long or uncomfortably crowded. Planners should anticipate the number of persons who may participate and, accordingly, select a worship space of sufficient size.

Creative and appropriate use of various media and arts will strengthen the vitality of this service.

A CELEBRATION OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY

ENTRANCE

GATHERING

Festive music may be offered while the people gather. The service may then continue with a procession including the worship leaders and bishop(s), other participants in worship, and those persons to be recognized, affirmed, or commissioned.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN *

Processional hymns are listed on 88.

GREETING AND PRAYER *

The bishop greets the people and they respond:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

We come together to praise God,
to hear the Holy Word,
and to seek for ourselves and others
the power, presence, and direction of the Holy Spirit.
Let us pray.

**Eternal God, by Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit
you gave to your people many excellent gifts.
Give your grace
to all who have been called through baptism to ministry,
that they may with diligence and faithfulness
serve your church and the world,
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

RECOGNITION OF COMMON MINISTRY AND REAFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

The bishop, standing near a baptismal font, shell, or vessel of water, begins:

Ministry is the work of God,
done by the people of God.
Through baptism
all Christians are made part of the priesthood of all believers,
the church, Christ's body, made visible in the world.
We all share in Christ's ministry of love and service
for the redemption of the human family and the whole of creation.

Therefore, in celebration of our common ministry,
I call upon all God's people gathered here:

The bishop may scoop and pour water from the font, shell, or vessel and say:

Remember your baptism and be thankful.

**We remember our baptism
and affirm our common ministry.**

All are seated.

Here music, a video, or other sign or action may be used to celebrate and affirm Christian ministry in daily life.

Persons baptized during the last year, persons confirmed, and any persons who have made a new beginning in faith or committed themselves to a life of devotion and service, may be invited to stand in their places. A prayer of blessing may be offered or a suitable song or hymn sung.

PRESENTATION

The presentation may include the following:

- *Persons making a short-term commitment to the service of Christ on work trips or projects, presented by the conference lay leader or mission leader;*
- *Persons who have been or will be certified for specialized ministries, presented by a conference representative of the certifying group;*
- *Persons from the annual conference who are to be commissioned as missionaries and/or missionaries who are being received from another annual conference or denomination, presented by a representative of the General Board of Global Ministries;*
- *Probationary members to be commissioned as ministers of the annual conference, presented by the chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry;*
- *Persons to be given licenses as local pastors presented by their respective district superintendents;*
- *Persons entering the ministry of the annual conference, presented by the chair of the Board of Ordained Ministry.*

To maintain movement and conserve time, the presentations may be by groups rather than as individuals.

OFFERING

An offering for the work of God may be received.

PROCLAMATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON(S)

Suggested scripture lessons are found on 87-88.

Hymns of response to the Scripture are listed on 88.

SERMON

RESPONSE

The response may include a hymn, the Apostles' Creed, or other actions that celebrate the ministry of all Christians, the diversity of the Spirit's gifts, or the equipping of God's people for service in daily life for spreading scriptural holiness and transforming the world.

COMMISSIONING TO SHORT-TERM CHRISTIAN SERVICE

This order may be used when persons have or will serve on a work trip or project.

Those to be recognized come forward and face the bishop. The bishop or other person briefly describes the work trips or projects.

The bishop says to the congregation:

All who take upon themselves the name of Christ
are called into ministries of love and service by the example of Christ.
As these members of our annual conference
work among the people of location(s),
we pray the blessings of God and this community upon their endeavors.

The congregation responds:

**We recognize you as ambassadors of this annual conference.
We thank you for your service in the name of Jesus Christ.
Through our prayers we are united with you in your work.
May God richly bless your labors.**

The bishop says:

Let us affirm our belief in the responsibilities of Christian service.

The congregation may join those being commissioned in saying "The World Methodist Social Affirmation" (UMH 886) or the following abbreviated version of "The United Methodist Social Creed":

**We believe in God, Creator of the world;
and in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of creation.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, through whom we acknowledge God's gifts.**

We commit ourselves to the rights and dignity of all persons
and to the improvement of the quality of life.
We dedicate ourselves to peace throughout the world
and to the rule of justice and law among all nations.
We believe in the present and final triumph
of God's Word in human affairs,
and gladly accept our commission
to manifest the life of the gospel in the world.

A hymn may be sung and a blessing given. See UMBOW 592 for hymns.

RECOGNITION OF CERTIFICATION

This ritual may be used with persons who have been certified in a particular field of ministry since the last session of the annual conference.

Those persons to be recognized and a representative of the certifying group come forward and face the bishop. The names of the persons certified and the area of their certification should be listed in the printed order of service.

On behalf of each certifying group, a leader tells the conference of the importance and need for competent and trained leaders in the many ministries of the church, concluding:

Today we are happy to recognize these who have been certified
and celebrate their entry into these ministries.

The bishop says to these persons:

We rejoice with you and thank God for your entry into this ministry.
As you serve God's people with training and knowledge
we will stand with you and offer you our fullest support.

Then the bishop may pray extemporaneously, or the bishop and people join in prayer:

God of grace and power,
pour out your Spirit on these persons
as they minister among us.
Guide and strengthen them for their work,
the work you have called and prepared for them to do,
that together we may be one in ministry to all the world;
through your Son Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

A hymn may be sung while an appropriate gift or symbol of the ministry for which each has been certified is presented.

BLESSING OF MISSIONARIES

Missionaries are a gift of God. Annual conferences that receive missionaries are blessed.

Annual conferences that have missionaries going out from them are blessed to support them with their love, prayers, and tangible gifts. While United Methodist missionaries are commissioned by The General Board of Global Ministries, the annual conference may appropriately recognize and bless those whom Christ has called to go or come as missionaries.

Those persons to be recognized and a representative of The General Board of Global Ministries come forward and face the bishop. The names of the persons should be listed in the printed order of service.

A representative of The General Board of Global Ministries presents candidates going to other areas:

I present to you *Name(s)* and their families
who are to be sent by The United Methodist Church
as partners with Christ in mission to *location(s)*.

A representative of The General Board of Global Ministries presents candidates coming to an area:

I present to you *Name(s)* and their families
who have been sent to us by *sending agency*
and will be serving among us at *location(s)*.

We welcome them among us as fellow laborers in the gospel.

The bishop addresses the people:

In the Book of Acts the Holy Spirit
set apart Saul and Barnabas for the work of mission.
The early church eagerly sent its members to other peoples,
to assist those who were already of the household of faith
and those who did not yet believe in Christ.
Today we recognize and ask God's blessing on these persons
who will serve in this tradition.
Their commissioning *has taken / will take* place at another time.
Here we thank God for them and the communities they will serve.
The prayers we offer are an expression of the ties
that bind us together in the body of Christ.

The bishop may invite the people to stretch their hands toward the missionaries as the bishop extends hands over them, praying:

**Strong Word of God, by whom the world was created,
in whom the world is redeemed,
bless these your servants.
May these heralds bear the good news,
that your saving way may be made known in every place and time,
in every land and to every people,
for your sake and for the sake of the world. Amen.**

or

God of every people, language, and tribe,
we ask you to bless these your servants.
Fill their hearts with the power of the Holy Spirit.
Surround them with joy
and a sense of being at home wherever you place them.
Let our love go with them and
may they always be faithful messengers of salvation and peace. Amen.

A hymn may be sung. See UMBOW 741 for hymns.

COMMISSIONING OF PROBATIONARY MEMBERS FOR SERVICE

The text for commissioning is found on 73.

PRESENTING LICENSES TO LOCAL PASTORS

While their licenses may be presented in a service of worship in the congregation the local pastor is serving or at a district conference with the district superintendent or a representative of the district superintendent presiding, it is appropriate for licenses to be presented at a session of annual conference.

The license is valid in the charge to which one is appointed and for the duration of the appointment. The names of the persons should be listed in the printed order of service.

A representative of the Board of Ordained Ministry says:

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
we present to you Names to be licensed as a local pastors.

Bishop to the people:

These persons have completed the requirements
for the license as local pastors
and are recommended by the District Committees on Ordained Ministry.
We have inquired diligently concerning them
and have found them to be fit for this sacred vocation.

Bishop to the candidates:

You are hereby authorized to serve as local pastors
in the congregation to which you are appointed.
Take care that you perform these duties faithfully,
the Lord being your helper.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, whose Word is truth,
in the keeping of which is eternal life:
We thank you for these persons,
whom we set aside in your name as local pastors.
Prepare them in body, mind, and spirit for their task,
and continue them in your grace,
that they may increase and bless your church
through their labors;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

A hymn may be sung as licenses are presented and the local pastors take their places. See hymns listed in UMH 940 under Discipleship and Service.

RECOGNITION OF OTHERS ENTERING THE MINISTRY OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The bishop and Board of Ordained Ministry may welcome others who are entering the ministry of the annual conference, such as:

- *Persons serving under appointment from another annual conference;*
- *Persons in extension ministries within the bounds of the annual conference;*
- *Persons in associate or affiliate membership from another annual conference;*
- *Persons transferring their membership from another annual conference;*
- *Persons holding orders in another denomination who will be serving a congregation in the annual conference.*

This recognition may include asking such persons to stand and be greeted by the bishop and be prayed for by the community of faith. Names of these persons should be listed by categories in the printed order of service.

DISTRIBUTION AND FIXING OF APPOINTMENTS

The list of appointments for the coming year are distributed to the annual conference.

CHARGE TO LICENSED, COMMISSIONED, CONSECRATED, AND ORDAINED MINISTERS

All these ministers stand as the bishop speaks:

In faithfulness to God who has called you to ministry,
will you go where you are sent or have been called
to serve Christ with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength?

The licensed, commissioned, consecrated, and ordained persons respond:

**By God's grace we are called into ministry.
In God's strength we will go where we are sent and called.**

With God's help, we will strive to be faithful, loyal servants.

The licensed, commissioned, consecrated, and ordained persons remain standing.

CHARGE TO THE BAPTIZED

All other ministers stand as the bishop speaks:

As people committed to uphold the Church
by your prayers, presence, gifts, and service,
will you affirm and receive these women and men
as servants of our Savior Jesus Christ,
and pledge to them your support?

They respond:

**We joyfully reaffirm our faith in Christ
and our commitment to the ministry of his church.
We will receive these persons as servants among us,
and we will support them in their ministries.**

All remain standing.

THE COVENANT *

The covenant is based on John Wesley's Covenant Renewal Service of 1780, as is found in UMBOW 288-94. The bishop addresses the congregation:

Commit yourselves to Christ as his servants.
Give yourselves to him, that you may belong to him.
Christ has many services to be done.
Some services are more easy and honorable,
other services are more difficult and disgraceful.
In some services we may please Christ and please ourselves.
But then there are other works where we cannot please Christ
except by denying ourselves.
Let us therefore go to Christ and pray:

All pray:

**Let me be your servant, under your command.
I will no longer be my own.
I will give myself to your will in all things.
Lord, make me what you will.
I put myself fully into your hands:
put me to doing, put me to suffering,
let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,
let me be full, let me be empty,**

let me have all things, let me have nothing.
I freely and with a willing heart
give it all to your pleasure and disposal.

O mighty God, the Lord Omnipotent,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
you have now become my Covenant Friend.
And I, through your infinite grace,
have become your covenant servant.
So be it.
And let the covenant I have made on earth
be ratified in heaven. Amen.

SENDING FORTH

*The service may conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving for the ministry of all God's people
and a blessing of the people by the bishop.*

HYMN *

Hymns are listed on 88.

*If the closing hymn is a recessional, it should follow the Dismissal with Blessing;
otherwise it should precede the Dismissal with Blessing.*

The bishop blesses the people:

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

A new deacon or a newly commissioned minister sends the people forth:

Go in peace
to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do.

**We are sent in Christ's name.
Thanks be to God.**

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE LESSONS AND HYMNS

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis 18:1-14a	Abraham and Sarah called
Exodus 3:1-18	The call of Moses
Exodus 15:20-21	Song of Miriam
Exodus 33:12-17	My presence will go with you.
Numbers 11:16-17, 24-25a	Moses and the seventy elders
Judges 4:1-7	Narrative of Deborah
1 Kings 17:8-24	Widow of Zarephath ministers
Esther 4:10-17	Esther's plea for justice
Psalms 23 (UMH 137, 754, 873)	The Lord is my shepherd.
Psalms 40:1-11 (UMH 774)	I delight to do your will, O my God.
Psalms 43 (UMH 778)	I will go to your altar.
Psalms 84 (UMH 804)	How lovely is your dwelling place.
Psalms 96 (UMH 815)	Worship the Lord in holy splendor.
Psalms 99 (UMH 819)	God the supreme ruler
Psalms 100 (UMH 821)	We are the people of God.
Psalms 119:33-40 (UMH 842)	Prayer for understanding
Psalms 122 (UMH 845)	I was glad when they said to me
Psalms 132 (UMH 849)	In praise of the temple
Isaiah 6:1-8	Here am I! Send me!
Isaiah 42:1-9	A servant song
Isaiah 43:8-13	You are my witnesses.
Isaiah 52:7-10	Your God reigns.
Isaiah 55:6-11	My word shall not return to me empty.
Isaiah 61:1-6a	The Spirit of the Lord
Jeremiah 1:4-10	Before you were born I consecrated you.
Jeremiah 31:31-34	A new covenant
Ezekiel 33:1-9	The watcher's duty
Ezekiel 34:11-16	God, the good shepherd

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew 9:35-38	The Lord of the harvest
Matthew 10:1-7	The call of the twelve
Matthew 10:24-33	Everyone who acknowledges me
Matthew 18:15-20	Where two or three are gathered in my name
Matthew 20:25-28	Not to be served but to serve
Matthew 28:16-20	Make disciples of all nations.
Mark 10:35-45	Whoever would be great among you
Luke 1:47-55	Song of Mary
Luke 2:36-38	Song of Anna
Luke 8:1-3	Women who followed Jesus
Luke 10:1-12	The Lord of the harvest
Luke 10:38-42	Ministry of Mary and Martha
Luke 12:32-40	Vigilant servants
Luke 22:14-30	One who serves
Luke 24:44-49	Witnesses with a message and a promise
John 4:7-42	Woman of Samaria carries a message.
John 6:35-40	I am the bread of life.
John 10:1-18	The Good Shepherd
John 12:20-26	Sir, we wish to see Jesus.
John 13:1-18	Jesus washes the disciples' feet.
John 14:25-31	The Holy Spirit will teach you all things.
John 15:9-17	I have called you friends.
John 17:1-9	Jesus prays for his disciples.
John 20:1-18	Witnesses to the living Christ

NEW TESTAMENT continued

John 20:19-23	Receive the Holy Spirit.
John 21:15-19	Feed my sheep.
Acts 6:2-7	Choosing deacons
Acts 9:36-42	Paul and Dorcas
Acts 20:17-35	Paul's farewell to the elders
Romans 10:9-17	Those who preach good news
Romans 12:1-18	The consecrated life
1 Corinthians 1:18-31	We preach Christ crucified.
1 Corinthians 3:10-17	No other foundation but Christ
1 Corinthians 12:4-13	Varieties of gifts
2 Corinthians 3:4-9	Ministers of a new covenant
2 Corinthians 4:1-11	Not ourselves but Christ
2 Corinthians 5:14-20	Ambassadors for Christ
Ephesians 3:14-21	Strengthened with might
Ephesians 4:1-15	Lead a worthy life.
Ephesians 5:15-21	Be filled with the Spirit.
Ephesians 6:10-18	Take the whole armor of God.
Philippians 4:4-9	Rejoice in the Lord always.
1 Timothy 3:1-13	Qualifications of leaders
1 Timothy 4:12b-16	Do not neglect your gift.
2 Timothy 1:6-14	Rekindle the gift God gave you.
2 Timothy 3:1-7	In season and out of season
Hebrews 5:1-10	Appointed for obedient service
Hebrews 12:1-6, 12-14	Jesus, the perfecter of our faith
1 Peter 4:7-11	Good stewards of God's grace
Peter 5:1-11	An elder's qualities

PROCESSIONAL HYMNS

554	All Praise to Our Redeeming Lord	159	Lift High the Cross
555	Forward Through the Ages	547	O Church of God, United
552	Here, O Lord, Your Servants Gather	66	Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven
89	Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee	39	Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
		545-46	The Church's One Foundation

HYMNS DURING THE SERVICE

Hymns may be used as responses to the scripture lessons or as acts of worship throughout the service.

650	Give Me the Faith Which Can Remove	584	Lord, You Give the Great Commission
578	God of Love and God of Power	396	O Jesus, I Have Promised
648	God the Spirit, Guide and Guardian	430	O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee
593	Here I Am, Lord	501	O Thou Who Camest from Above
649	How Shall They Hear the Word of God	583	Sois la Semilla (You Are the Seed)
432	Jesu, Jesu (especially for diaconal consecration services)	408	The Gift of Love
398	Jesus Calls Us	436	The Voice of God Is Calling
580	Lead On, O King Eternal	344	Tu Has Venido a la Orilla (Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore); (especially for diaconal consecration services)

CLOSING HYMNS

If the closing hymn is a recessional, it should follow the Dismissal with Blessing; otherwise it should precede the Dismissal with Blessing.

413	A Charge to Keep I Have	586	Let My People Seek Their Freedom
566	Blest Be the Dear Uniting Love	584	Lord, You Give the Great Commission
438	Forth in Thy Name, O Lord	583	Sois la Semilla (You Are the Seed)
571	Go, Make of All Disciples	399	Take My Life, and Let It Be
		585	This Little Light of Mine
		582	Whom Shall I Send?
		606	Come, Let Us Use the Grace Divine